THE

MAID

OF

KENT.

Le faux eſt toujours fade, ennuieux, languiſſant;
Mais la nature eſt vraye, et d'abord on la ſent.

BOILEAU.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

THE MAID OF KENT.

ARRIVAL IN ENGLAND.

SEVERAL days had elapſed at Amiens, and I was ſo far recovered as to think of my departure for England. Cornwall had remained by my ſide, and had ſuppreſſed his anxieties for the ſituation of his ſiſter, by his apprehenſions of my own danger. To paint the agony of his mind, words would be deficient of force. When he

found I had been raiſed from my bed, and had received no very material injury from my wound, he prepared to take his leave. On the over-night before his departure, as we were engaged in a recapitulation of our paſt incidents,

" My dear Edward," ſays he, " Doctor " Philpot has explained to me your ſitu- " ation. The conflict you are now ſtrug- " gling with can only be equalled by the " affliction in my own breaſt. I have ſo- " lemnly acquitted you of any wanton " intruſion on the affections of my ſiſter. " The firmneſs of your ſoul has triumphed " over the flattering incentive of youth, " and I am now taught to admire that " heart which has reſigned an unfated em- " pire to the hazard of an equal poſſeſ- " ſion. Your purſuit of the lovely Frances " may be ineffectual; and ſhould you be " deceived in the object of your happi- " neſs, the error I have been ſurpriſed " into muſt appear doubly odious in my " ſight. I ſhall leave you with a ſenſe of " injury which my earneſt requeſt of for-

" giveneſs

" giveneſs can only make a poor atone-
" ment for. I ſhall leave you to lament
" the raſhneſs of a man, whoſe misfortune
" can only be alleviated by a hope that
" his pardon is ſincere. But how ſhall I
" retire to my home?—Terrible and ill-
" fated moment to enter thoſe doors, where
" diſtreſs and real tragedy have been per-
" petrated!

" Amelia, perhaps, will be no more—
" and, with the diſordered mind of my
" father on the downfall of his fortune, all
" my happineſs muſt vaniſh.

" How muſt I return! To contemplate
" the agony of a deluded parent on the
" happineſs of his family? To mourn over
" the bier of a much-loved ſiſter?

" But now let me be frank, Edward,
" before I depart—before I leave you,
" perhaps never, never to meet again—let
" the confeſſion be made in ſpight of the
" pride of my ſoul. That friendſhip
" which I had vowed of eternal duration,

" I thought was degraded by your early
" connection with Fanny. From my ſiſter
" I kept concealed the ſecret you en-
" truſted me with; and as you perſevered
" in your attention to her perſon, ſo I was
" flattered with hopes, that the paſſion
" which you had conceived, when a boy,
" might be diſſipated by the attractions of
" Amelia. I found my hopes daily ripen-
" ing, and I was equally elated with my
" father at the proſpects of this flattering
" union.

" I had entered too deeply into the plot
" not to be rouſed to a ſenſe of diſappoint-
" ment on your change of reſolution. My
" friendſhip turned to revenge; nor could
" my proud heart feel the ſhock which
" that friendſhip had received till you had
" felt the exceſs of my reſentment. I
" could then liſten to the defence of your
" cauſe.

" Amelia, in the anger and diſappoint-
" ment of my father, has been falſely ac-
" cuſed—She dies of a broken heart—her
" natural

" natural delicacy and exceſs of ten-
" derneſs rendered her unable to with-
" ſtand the ſtern accuſation of my father,
" and your attachment — for when ſhe
" found your engagement with Fanny,
" from that inſtant ſhe delivered herſelf up
" to the melancholy which preyed upon
" her. I left her reſigned in the interval
" of a dangerous fever, which had fixed
" itſelf on her nerves, and which the phy-
" ſician pronounced incurable, though its
" termination was uncertain."

I replied, " that my misfortunes were
" early come upon me; that it was impoſ-
" ble for me to reflect on our long and
" early friendſhip without feeling a marked
" and deep affliction. That if my for-
" giveneſs could relieve the anguiſh of his
" mind, that forgiveneſs was unfeigned
" and ſincere. Perhaps my puniſhment
" was merited — perhaps there was due to
" the ſufferings of his lamented ſiſter the
" expiation which his hand had inflicted.
" As my griefs were mingled with his
" griefs, I conjured him to preſerve our

" friendſhip inviolate; and that, on my " return to England, I had an earneſt " prayer to offer for my reſpite, from " anxiety in ſeeing his ſiſter reſtored to her " health, and his father prevailed on to " accept of ſome remuneration from the " miniſter."

After a mutual embrace we retired to our ſeparate apartments.

On the morning George Cornwall left Amiens for England; and, on the ſecond day after his departure, we ſet off with the ſurgeon, who accompanied us the greateſt part of the road by ſlow and eaſy poſts.

Philpot was nearly cured, and I was in a fair ſtate of having my wound perfectly healed in a few days.

My father had been previouſly prepared for our return; and, on our arrival at Dover, we beheld him in his carriage ready waiting to receive us.

His

His joy and anxiety were great, and he folded me in his arms with the moſt exquiſite ſenſe of parental tenderneſs.

He had prepared the houſe at Boxley for our reception, and his own ſurgeon had accompanied him to Dover. Lady Hales was left in the town houſe, and a plauſible tale had been framed, leſt her apprehenſions might be excited.

No information was received of the deſtination of Mrs. Gordon and Frances. At Boulogne we found their route had been directed to Calais — perhaps they might have choſe the latter port for the ſhortneſs of the paſſage, or to elude the purſuit of Fitz-Morris.

Our adventures had given my father the moſt pathetic concern, and his mind ſeemed much impreſſed with the reſentment and the contrition of the unhappy Cornwall.

Having recruited ourſelves from the fatigue of the journey, we judged it expe-

dient, after our reſidence of a few days, to ſet off for town. Our anxious deſires to diſcover Mrs. Gordon and Fanny were much increaſed; but our fears were much ſubſided on the certain knowledge of their arrival, and of the protection which our laws afforded againſt any violent intruſion on the ſide of Fitz-Morris. Herein we felt no alarm—but our natural conjectures of the poſſible verſatility of the ſex cauſed our minds to fluctuate from apprehenſion to apprehenſion.

The pretenſions and eager purſuit of Fitz-Morris—the formidable rival, Montauban—her premature flight from Paris, at a time when ſhe was appriſed of our ſpeedy arrival, and eſpecially concluſions drawn from their knowledge of my intercourſe with Amelia Cornwall, filled my breaſt with increaſing anguiſh.

I had been nurſed in a rigid ſchool of virtue, early taught the value of that rectitude of principle which had led me often to take counſel of my own heart. I had

now

now every reaſon to make the ſtrongeſt appeal—accuſation followed, and, impreſſed with a glimpſe of the charming figure of the neglected Fanny, my heart ſeemed to be re-illumed with its original impulſe. Herein my pain — Like the tranſient glimpſe of an angel of adminiſtering rebuke, I conſidered moſt deeply the flitting ſhadow of her perſon at Chantilly as a judgement to renew my former attachment.

To heap confuſion and remorſe on my inſincerity—to recover from my deluſion—to atone for the violence of this ſacred, pure, and divine impulſe of primeval love, was now my ardent hope—I had performed an expiation for the deception of my heart with Amelia — and the ſame expiation ſerved to mitigate the ſeverity of ſelf conviction on the committed treſpaſs of neglect with the maid of my heart.

To forbear my foreboding conviction of Fanny's tranſgreſſions on the appearance of her infidelity, required the firmneſs of the graveſt philoſopher. To entertain ſenti-

ments of her innocence, flattered my ſoul with the renovation of exquiſite delight.

We poſted for town. On our arrival in Harley Street, rather late in the evening, we were ſtruck with the appearance of a ſtring of carriages in the ſtreet. Lady Hales held her route that evening. The uſual phantaſy of my mother, to flatter a natural and prevailing rage for company and *eclat*, made her ſelect thoſe evenings to ſee her friends, when Sir Simon was from home.

To do her ladyſhip juſtice, my father, though his humour flowed with as much milk of human kindneſs as ever entered the breaſt of a mortal, too often carried in his manner an appearance of cauſtic diſapprobation at theſe kind of feſtivals.

This, to a woman of a natural deſire to govern,

govern, had always circumvented the pleaſure ſhe derived in keeping much company; and it was by a kind of domeſtic compromiſe that my father, perhaps for the ſake of greater harmony, thought well of being ſecluded from her parties.

In ſhort, I had conſidered our return to the town houſe entirely unexpected, and which I found actually to be the caſe on our arrival. My mother was ſent for from the party, and, after having undergone her ſurpriſe and alarms at my unexpected return, ſhe deſired we might make our appearance; which being ſeconded by Sir Simon, though much fatigued from a relaxed ſtate of health and the journey, I conſented.

On our entry into the room we ſaw Lady Dorothy Murray making up to us, and, with an unuſual countenance of good humour, ſhe welcomed me over to England again, which ſhe hoped, ſhe ſaid, was for a better purpoſe than when I left it. She now propoſed a party of cards, and begged

to introduce us to Lady Cathneſs and her daughter, who were juſt arrived from Scotland, and to whom ſhe was deſirous of ſhewing every courteſy in her power.

After having made my ſalutation to Lady Cathneſs, and preparing to advance to the daughter, I noted a viſible confuſion in the countenance of the latter, who, in taking her ſeat, was ſcarce able to recover it, from an agitation which ſhe ſeemed to make the greateſt ſtruggles to ſuppreſs. This confuſion I attributed to youth, and want of habit to public company.

Various thoughts at that inſtant ſeemed to take poſſeſſion of me—the image of Fanny ruſhed at once into my mind, and the traits of this young lady did not a little ſerve to make the viſion more real—a face more ſimilar my eyes could never behold. It was this apparent ſimilarity which ſtill riveted my attention—I could have gazed with a fixed admiration if I had not been interrupted. The mother obſerved my rapt attention—ſhe diſcourſed with me on

ſome

ſome common place obſervations of the day, and of the polite reception ſhe had received from our family, particularly from Lady Dorothy, who knew moſt of her connections in the county of Angus.

When I retired from the ladies to join ſome young men of my acquaintance, who were waiting at a little diſtance to welcome my unexpected return, I ſuſpected my heart was not ſo firm in its elections—The rigid diſcipline which I had recently impoſed upon it ſeemed to relax at this inſtant —Every new face appeared to have its empire over me—Had not my affection for Fanny Underwood been finally choſen as the great drama of my youth, to ſee the final drop of the curtain, I ſhould have ſuffered my heart to have wandered on the daughter of this Scottiſh lady—the fatal conſequences too of my weakneſs for Amelia Cornwall, whoſe martyred image was ſtill harrowing up my conſcience—all conſpired to turn my curious gazing eyes from the exalted charms of the Angus beauty.

I joined

I joined my companions.

Our converſation was naturally directed to the new face, which, as they termed it, "was juſt arrived to ſport itſelf on the "town."

"Great fortune and great beauty—eh, "my friend!—worth cutting in for—Hales "muſt have the firſt rubber."

"He's a lucky dog," ſays another—"for if I may be allowed to judge of the "lady's twinkling, there's more truth in "your remark than you firſt wiſhed us to "believe. Ay, ay—leave the Scotch in "full poſſeſſion of their game—you will "generally ſee them play into each other's "hands. Hales's old raw-boned great "aunt, Lady Dorothy, has ſecured the "prize for her nephew."

"Why the devil," ſays another, "does "ſhe lay the paint on ſo thick? What "occaſion to make up a face without a "a wrinkle,

" a wrinkle, and where the features ſeem
" ſo naturally well ſhaped ?"

" Pſhaw ! never mind her paint," the former replied, " when there's a mine of
" Golconda under it."

The card tables were now prepared, and one of my *bon-ton* acquaintance ſpruced himſelf up to the ſtrangers to aſk them to cut in with a party. It was accepted, and they ſat down to cards.

But now the contraſt—my eyes inſenſibly fixed on the beautiful Scotch girl—a faſhionable and an elegant eaſe ſeemed to have taken place of her former embarraſsment—my proud heart reſerved to itſelf the claim of her notice, and in the vanity of youth I fancied myſelf preferred.

She drew forth a purſe.

I noted a hand of moſt exquiſite and delicate whiteneſs, relieved with various ſparkling gems on her fingers—wriſts ornamented

namented with bracelets of rich workmanſhip—and her dreſs throughout contrived to give her the air of ſuperior beauty, fortune, and pretenſions.

Thus rapt in admiration, ſhe received an eye of diſtinction, and the palm of beauty, dreſs, and elegance, was inſtantly given in her favour.

The ſurrounding attention of the men, old and young, who were diſputing the pleaſure of being attracted by her perſon, ſhe received, with the moſt collected looks of unaffected grace, the polite aſſiduities which the ſurrounding croud ſeemed diſpoſed to ſhew her.

Envy, I thought, was burſting from the hearts of her ſex, while my own would have willingly thrown themſelves at her feet to receive the ſevereſt mandate ſhe could have propoſed, as a proof of their willing admiration.

In ſhort, this Scotch girl had ſo much intereſt

intereſt in my curioſity, that, approaching to my mother and Lady Dorothy, I was deſirous of collecting more of her hiſtory.

Lady Dorothy met my ſolicitous enquiry, and, with equal avidity, gave me to underſtand, that Lady Cathneſs was one of the richeſt ladies in the county of Angus; that her ſuite and equipage were peculiarly noticed as the moſt ſplendid in town, and that ſhe had, no doubt, taken up her reſidence in London as a proper place to make her pretenſions to family and fortune better known among the nobility, to find a ſuitable match for her daughter.

" Naw, my lad," ſhe continued in her native dialect, which was as immutably radicated in her nature as her great partiality to her dear Scotland itſelf, " if you wull " but luck bonny and gude natured, her " laudyſhip wull, perhaps, dau us the " haunour of a faamily caunection. But " if yau have naw pride and glory in your " hert to ſpur you up the *burn* of haunour, you had better aſk naw mare " queſtions,

" queſtions, but follow your auld law-
" land knawtions of murrying awl for love
" of a pawr country *barn*."

Sir Simon now approached us with the Doctor——

" Edward," ſays he, " I would not have
" you ſtay long in the room—you look
" fatigued, my boy, and not ſo well as I
" could wiſh—retire, and get an early reſt,
" and we will diſcourſe more of the pretty
" girl of Angus to-morrow. Lady Doro-
" thy here, in the interim, ſhall extol your
" *gude* qualities, (imitating her dialect
" with his uſual pleaſantry) and endea-
" vour to ſee you at laſt made a convert
" to a Scottiſh union."

The truth was, I was really much agitated in my ſpirits, and which, perhaps, the reduced ſtate of my body did not a little increaſe.

I was glad to accept the propoſition, and was preparing to retire with the Doctor at the

the inſtant Lady Cathneſs's carriage was announced. I was faſcinated to remain in the room till the ladies roſe from their party.

They traverſed the room—I bowed as they paſſed—and they left the company with the admiration of every eye. The converſation was almoſt general on the well-bred eaſe and fine face of the young lady; and when I retired to my room, her form, with that of Fanny, were alternately occupying my thoughts till the appearance of broad daylight.

I fell into a ſlumber—what immeaſurable, what indiſcribable bliſs!—what a paradiſe of rapture had winged itſelf over my roving fancies!—I awaked—the ecſtaſy was vaniſhing—I could not part with it—I endeavoured to recall the pleaſing images of ſleep—to arrange the ſcattered and flitting objects which had hovered over my rapt ſoul—to embody the tranſe of ſuch vaſt and unſpeakable delight.

The fair form of the Angus maid had been portrayed to my viſion as the ſeraph of my early firſt love. The little Fanny had aſſumed the empire of beauty, and had taken captive the hearts of all my family and friends — the abhorred prejudice of a diſproportionate union had been vanquiſhed by the general claim which ſhe had laid to ſuperior beauty, grace, and the other flattering decorations of female glory. The approbation of all my family, of all the world, the unrivalled beauty, terreſtrial excellence of Fanny had aſſigned to me the privilege of a ſupreme high-favoured mortal in receiving her under this univerſal ſanction. Thus the daughter of Lady Cathneſs was made the aſſociate of my viſionary rapture. Unſpeakable delight! The nuptial ceremony, celebrated with the ſplendid pomp of my father's expanſion of ſoul in his hoſpitable country manſion— there heightened to the moſt exquiſite ſenſe of angel ecſtaſy, I ſaw the nymph approach the altar like a deſcending ſpirit of conſummating bliſs. Now the flitting viſion tranſported me to the crouded hall of feſtivity,

tivity, where every face, beaming with the chearful and applauding ſmiles of friendſhip and content, hailed me the moſt favoured, the moſt fortunate of men. The ſcene here ſhifted to a ſucceſſion of more-deeply impreſſed ecſtaſy — but I awoke, and the paradiſe was diſſipating as the ſtrength of returning reaſon dawned upon me—but, oh, how greatly diſproportionate! I turned my head on the pillow, and invoqued the god of ſleep to recall his magic power — but, no; my waking ſenſes had uſhered other thoughts to my mind—The anxious troubles of my life were now arranging their gloomy contraſt. The fate of Fanny, 'tis true, had taken poſſeſſion of my heart; but, from the ſtrong impreſſ which the dream had left upon me, I was more ſpurred on to ſee again the face of Miſs Cathneſs, than to trace the flight of the latter.

We heard of their arrival at Dover, where they had paſſed themſelves as *marchands des modes*, and had taken a chaiſe for London; but as the diſtance of time had

had been ſomewhat conſiderable, more than a fortnight having paſſed without gaining any intelligence of their ſituation, it ſeemed difficult to undertake a diſcovery.

I rung the bell, and Peter entering the room, I deſired him to enquire if Doctor Philpot was ſtirring, and to beg him to give me as early a meeting as poſſible to enquire after the objects of our purſuit.

He ſoon returned with the Doctor, who, approaching the ſide of my bed, and telling me, that having juſt parted with Samuel, he had heard ſome favourable account of Fanny and Mrs. Gordon, which he did not mean to impart till ſuch time as he had communicated to me his plan of introduction to them.

It was reſolved, therefore, that he ſhould firſt ſee Fanny, and enter into a ſcrutiny of her conduct, which had cauſed our alarms on the Paris buſineſs. That if he found there was the leaſt reaſon to ſuſpect her levity, my honour could not allow of my renewing the ſolemn ties I had otherwiſe bound myſelf to.

The

The impreſſion I had received from the daughter of Lady Cathneſs being ſo intimately interwoven with the tender remembrance of Fanny, I could not enter into any compromiſe; and I petulantly inſiſted on the Doctor informing me of the ſpot they were to be found in.

" No, Sir," ſays he; " I am reſolved to " bethe guardian of your honour. The ſacri- " fice which you have ſo nobly performed, " for the ſake of this young woman, de- " mands, on her ſide, the moſt ſatisfactory " proofs of her own virtue. Have you " not torn yourſelf from the arms of a " moſt amiable lady, ready to beſtow " upon you every return of human feli- " city—and was not your partiality to her " the natural conſequence of long abſence " from the firſt object of your affection?

" Wherein your treſpaſs?—not in your " regard for the lovely Amelia"——

I here interrupted him—" How is this " horrid ſcene terminated?—Recall not " my

" my tenderneſs—the remembrance is in-
" ſupportable—I dread to know the ſtate
" of that family."

" Amelia is not dead," he replied.
" Her brother is returned, and has already
" been to enquire after your health. He
" muſt, doubtleſs, believe your engage-
" ment is finally cancelled, unleſs a par-
" tial fondneſs returned upon you to en-
" courage you to renew your tenderneſs
" for Amelia—if not, you have the
" ſtrongeſt and moſt honourable motives
" to forget your connection in the Corn-
" wall family.

" No," he continued. " Fanny Un-
" derwood muſt give the cleareſt teſtimony
" of her unſhaken regard—ſhe muſt be al-
" ready undeceived in your attachment to
" Miſs Cornwall; therefore your honour
" muſt inſiſt on the firmeſt proof of her
" invariable affection."

But a more formidable reaſon for a pre-
vious

vious visit to my sister and the young Frances presents itself.

" Lady Cathness"——

" Ah!" I exclaimed—" and what of " her?

" Her daughter"——

He now fixed his eyes upon mine, and, with a long pause, seemed to pervade the inmost recesses of my soul.

" Your father, Edward, is waiting for " you—it is far advanced in the day— " Lady Dorothy is now at breakfast with " them.

" Lady Cathness has made enquiries " after your health. Perhaps you may " find your visits in that family not un- " welcome; so, at least, Lady Dorothy " seems to insinuate. Should the conduct, " then, of Fanny be arraigned in the af- " fair of Fitz-Morris, or the son of the

"Count de Montauban, you have a fair "claim to enter upon a freſh engage- "ment."

"A freſh engagement!" I replied— "With whom, Doctor?"

"With the daughter of Lady Cathneſs. "You have a ſtrong advocate, I aſſure "you, in that quarter. Lady Dorothy "has taken her breakfaſt here this morning "to propoſe the overtures. Her inſepa- "rable partiality to her dear nation, in- "clines her to negotiate this union with "the greateſt vehemence."

Sir Simon hearing of the arrival of this family in Harley Street, and finding theſe perſons of rank and figure, had deſired Lady Dorothy to viſit them; and as he had received ſuch favourable reports of their family and pretenſions, he had made a point of ſhewing them every diſtinction of civility in his power.

"The active deſire of Lady Dorothy,

" to unite her family with her favourite
" north-country *kaunections*, you may be
" ſure, is a ſtrong reaſon why ſhe has con-
" deſcended to enter into a conciliatory
" plan with your family; and eſpecially
" as your father was heard to paſs many
" encomiums on the beauty and accom-
" pliſhments of the daughter. Lady
" Hales alſo is much inclined to ſhew
" them every courteſy in her power, hav-
" ing this morning ordered her carriage,
" in company with Lady Dorothy, to in-
" troduce your ſiſter, Sophy, as her com-
" panion and friend."

Since the diſaffection of Lady Hales with Lady Jekyll, my mother, I thought, would naturally be inclined to cheriſh her prevailing turn for company and ſplendid appearance, and thus make ſome freſh acquaintance; therefore it was not unlikely but that Lady Cathneſs and her daughter would, as having engaged the public notice, be doubly acceptable to her vanity.

The dream ſo recent in my mind, I felt

a conviction from the Doctor's argument. The name of Lady Cathneſs and her beautiful daughter raiſed in me a ſympathy which words are not powerful enough to convey a deſcription of—it had taken poſſeſſion of my ſoul; and though I was tormented with various conflicts which human intelligence could not aſſert or digeſt into any rational order for my future government, I found a repoſe and inward ſatisfaction when they were mentioned.

To add to the ſtrong intereſt which I had received on their account, the Doctor informed me that the ladies had received an invitation to a route, which was to be given on the night following at Lady Champignion's, and that Sir Simon, Lady Hales, my ſiſter Sophy, and Lady Dorothy, were to be there.

From the invitation and cards to be ſent, it was expected to be one of the moſt faſhionable and moſt brilliant which the town had experienced for ſeveral years. Every amuſement was expected to be propoſed

poſed by her ladyſhip—cards, dancing, and an elegant collation.

At the idea of reviſiting the fair ſpirit of my extatic dreams—to unite in the perſon of Miſs Cathneſs all that my heart could hold dear and highly prized — the ſemblance of Fanny Underwood—the ſanction of parents, friends, and all the world—whatever ambition or the moſt romantic fancy could ſuggeſt, all centered in this elyſium object — How diſproportionate my other former ties with the ſex! — A pang of conſcience might be uttered for the fate of Amelia Cornwall, but the preſent tranſport of my heart chided all other remonſtrance — and, with Fanny Underwood, I could have baniſhed the latent wiſhes I had cheriſhed, if the Doctor had continued his rhetoric with the ſame efficacy.

I had dreſſed myſelf, and entered the breakfaſt room — there, to my utter aſtoniſhment,

niſhment, I beheld, for once in my life, a perfect family picture of harmony — Old Lady Dorothy in high ſpirits—Lady Hales giving orders to her maid for the appearance of her mantua maker to alter a ſuit of clothes for the enſuing ball—Sir Simon delighted in ſeeing me ſo freſh, from my recent misfortune, and the event of the over-night.

" Edward, your looks have acquired
" freſh animation. It is reported the
" daughter of Lady Cathneſs attracted
" your notice all the time you ſtaid in the
" room. You will have no duels on her
" account, my dear boy; for Lady Doro-
" thy ſays, that her beauty and attraction
" are more tranſcendant than any Venus of
" delight you ever beheld; and if you are
" ſo raſh as to accompany us to Lady
" Champignion's, that another gaze will
" remove at ſuch a diſtance the haram of
" your former gallantry, that your affec-
" tions will become perfectly frigid at the
" retroſpect. No other woman upon earth
" will be ever fit to light the torch of
" hymen

" hymen after the Angus luminary has dif-
" appeared: therefore, Edward, if you
" find yourſelf bold enough to forget your
" former gallantries, and triumph in the
" preſent moment, Lady Dorothy ſays ſhe
" will undertake to ſtrew your way over
" with flowers.

LADY DOROTHY. " On my troth and
" I wull, my dear child. But I am afraid
" Edward is nae bauld enaugh to ſtand
" firm when his hert is toutched. If he
" will promiſe me to have and to hauld
" the fair lady of his hert's deſire, without
" ſhilly ſhallying from one bonny laſs to
" another, I will undertake, before we go
" to Lady Champignion's ball, to engage
" him the fineſt girl for his partner in au
" North or South Britain.

" Au the naubility and firſt gentry wull
" be invited, and I wull auncer for it,
" there wull not be a perſon in the room
" but would wiſh themſelves in his
" brogues."

This broad and rather courſe humour of her ladyſhip made no great impreſſion on my reſolution. I ſilently received their chearfulneſs; and giving my bare aſſent to accompany them to Lady Champignion's ball, turned the diſcourſe to the viſit of young Cornwall.

The carriage was ready—The ladies now aroſe.

Sir Simon, reverting to George Cornwall, ſaid, that he had endeavoured to make the fulleſt atonement for the deſperate revenge he had made on your life.

Before he had received my letter on the unfortunate accident at Amiens, George Cornwall had reached Harley Street—had flung himſelf at my father's feet, whoſe generous ſoul, after he found the life of his ſon was out of danger, commiſerated the deſperate ſtate of his mind.

When Mr. Cornwall had found I was ſet off for France — his daughter neglected—

the

the ruined ſtate of his fortune—the little efficacy of his political ſyſtem, in which he had been unweariedly engaged for a ſeries of years — all his projects circumvented— and being of a natural ſanguinary temper, he had not muſtered ſufficient philoſophy to contend with his afflictions. In the tempeſt of his mental agitation, he had loaded me with execration in the preſence of his ſon; and certain animating expreſſions of reſentment having eſcaped him, George had conſidered himſelf as the avenger of the conceived injury done to his ſiſter.

In ſhort, Sir Simon had reſumed his former friendſhip with the family; and old Cornwall having acceded to certain meaſures propoſed by him, there was a probability of his redeeming ſome mortgages, and ſecuring his political independancy.

Amelia too had languiſhed of a nervous fever, perhaps not ſo much occaſioned by the diſappointment ſhe had received from

me, as from the unhappy contention and diſtreſs which had prevailed in the family. Her complaint was dangerous, but not expected to be immediate.

THE

THE BALL.

THOUGH I entered the room rather early, Lady Hales, Lady Dorothy, my ſiſter Sophia, and Sir Simon, had arrived before me. Lady Cathneſs and the paragon of perfection, were not come. Lady Dorothy had engaged me to dance a minuet in turn with her. It had been accepted by the young lady, and with the willing ſanction of her mother. The ſwelling expectation in my heart increaſed with her tardy arrival. Every beautiful face which entered the room—every nodding plume — every announce on the door's opening, cauſed my breaſt to throb with unuſual alarms.

Fair faces I had ſeen, and the habit of company muſt have ſilenced all the flutter-

ing feels of novelty — why therefore the daughter of Lady Cathneſs ſhould cauſe the perturbation? — I began to ſuſpect this was the firſt moment I ever experienced the genuine order of pure love—all other impreſſions from the ſex ſeemed flat, and inanimate to the preſent. Fanny Underwood—a ſelf-accuſation for a moment ſuppreſſed the tranſcendance of this new object —but there was a dawning within my ſoul that the proof of her infidelity might be confirmed by Philpot. In this caſe there was no need to conſult my heart farther—the partial choice would have been placed finally in favour of Miſs Cathneſs.

Several officers of the guards now made their appearance, and in the groupe I noted young Jekyll—his face ſcarce recognizable —incaſed in the raging red-hot faſhion of the day, the well-known cape had eclipſed a great portion of his phiz — while the ſtriped and party-coloured muſlin cravat, extending two inches beyond the chin, ſeemed to conceal a monſtrous craw under it. I was diſpoſed to be cenſorious; but caſting

caſting my eyes upon his picked-toe ſhoe, it brought to my mind a ſimilar dreſs in the time of one of our Edwards, when the beaux wore thoſe to a more immoderate length, with chains which reached to the middle of the body. This retroſpect rather reconciled me to his appearance, eſpecially as my own dreſs was not many degrees under the extremity of his; and the youth ſeemed highly delighted with his perſon and toilet.

He made up to me—" D——d glad to
' ſee you returned, Hales — D——d
" good bet at Brooke's propoſed—odds in
" your favour that you carry off the Scotch
" prize—D——d ſtrong party made up
" to ſee Lady Cathneſs and her daughter
" *bravura* it to-night—d——d good ſtroke
" your coming over from France in ſuch
" a hurry — d——d ſenſible old *quoz* of
" an aunt, Lady Dorothy, to put you on
" the ſcent — d——d ſight of diſpatches
" gone to Brighton—all the pinks will be
" after her in a few days—d——d good—
" no, he hasn't—yes, he had—certainly

" not

" not—broach'd this—precluded that—
" daſh'd here—diſhed him up there"—
and with a ſtring of all the town phraſes of the young gigs in high life, he run on with a volubility, which convinced me of his being the inſipid mimic of the fooliſh boys who lounge away their lives in town follies.

But his oaths, his ſtile of ſwearing, ſo unlike his celebrated original, that his energy ſoon convinced his hearers, that he was one of thoſe tame and eaſily-plucked pigeons that would come with any lure—and this I found to be the caſe; for, turning my hand to one of his gayly-dreſſed companions, I found he had been juſt admitted to the club, in hopes of his ſoaring genius taking a turn for a more noble and conſpicuous ſpecies of imitation. The ſcheme had ſucceeded; for my old friend, maſter Billy, inſtead of diſhing others, was in the fair way of being diſhed up himſelf.

The door now opened—Lady Cathneſs was announced—ſhe entered—the fairy princeſs

princeſs of my enraptured dream was realiſed.

Her figure ſimilar to a painting of Henrietta, Charles's wife, by Vandyke — with more refined elegance—more fancy—her ringlets garniſhed with a coloured powder, with a looſe ſimplicity falling on her neck —her robe of muſlin, ſpangled with variegated foil — her ceſtus the ſame, but richly adorned with ſpotted gold. Thus attired, with ſteps as light as Goſſamer, ſhe advanced to the lady of the houſe.

To cull the moſt beautiful, the moſt graceful forms from nature, ſeems to have been a taſk reſerved for the preſent age — how difficult the choice! — *le vrais n'eſt pas toujours le beau* — is an expreſſion of the celebrated critic of Louis XIV. How ſtrongly this applies to dreſs — *beauty is not always found in truth.* Though nature is truth, nature muſt not always be imitated. The ringlet floating on the neck of a lovely [illegible], ſelected from the various forms of ſimple unadorned nature — the arrangement

ment of the drapery — the line of beauty ever preſerved by the diſtinguiſhing eye of the connoiſſeur—herein is diſcoverable true taſte, real elegance — herein is found the genius, the delicate ſenſe of the ſex—to know where to decorate—where to reveal—where to be exuberant in fancy—where to expoſe ſimplicity of nature — what form pleaſes—what repreſentation is allowed—to watch with ſkilful diſcernment the caprice of the men — to unrobe, or to devellop where reaſon approves, where cuſtom juſtifies—even geſture conſidered, though not ſeemingly ſtudied, to impart delight.

There is a harmony in words, motion, look, and dreſs, of a ſenſible woman, when ſhe wiſhes to impart pleaſure; and where that exquiſite talent is diſcovered, the harmony is always found ſo ſtrictly correſponding with nature, of ſuch an univerſal influence, that the men, though various in their modes of admiration, are never dubious in this — they give their full unlimited conſent—the wreath of ſuperior charms to the female

female who has diſcovered this arcana of delicious preference.

How careful, how ſedulous then ſhould beautiful females be in this ſo ſtriking an eſſential to attract the admiration of the men? — Herein is centered every virtue which can be found inherent in their nature — To fix, to attach the men to their charms — this truly ſublime and exalted character muſt be produced by refinement — education, the fineſt poliſh which can be imparted to the female mind — a poliſh, which, before it can ſhine with tranſcendant luſtre, muſt expel the droſs, the intrinſic alloy — The mind muſt be perfectly pure before it can receive this height of finiſhing. Virtue and native grace muſt be the baſis of this work — on this all the outward perfections of the body are elevated. Virtue imparts a moſt exquiſite delight to the gazing eye — all the actions — the movements of the body accord with this heavenly ſpring of the female ſex — She who poſſeſſes this, knows the chaſte difference between inanimate pudor and flippant forwardneſs.

wardneſs. Refined and well-poliſhed, well-educated minds, impreſſed with the delicate ſenſe of virtue, have diſcovered that ſuperlative medium. They have taught the boiſterous paſſions of the other ſex, where the real center of true bliſs is to be found. They can reveal, yet conceal—impart, yet reſtrain—attire with ſuperior faſhion, yet preſerve their native grace—diſplay their ſkill, talents, various accompliſhments, yet never alienate by their unrivalled excellencies. It is not the retired, abaſhed countenance—the plaintive, effeminate, and inanimate form, waiting for approach—it is the open, yet modeſt lure—that look of virtue, yet revealed deſire—that ſenſe of natural right and moral treſpaſs. It is that poliſh of true refinement which has fixed the limits of all mortal voluptuouſneſs, and which has learned the art of its immutable laws. The companion, friend, effuſions of fraternal affection, wedded love, all centered in the object of the choice. Where one ſmall link is found impaired in the chain, there the female is forewarned of her danger. All is love—all falls to the ground.

In ſtrict uniſon, the full completion of rapture is loſt, when once the female is found deficient in theſe acquirements.

And what greater, more pre-eminent bliſs, than to win the admiration of the men? Is not every virtue, in ſocial life, forwarded, compleated by the ſex, when they are ſenſible of their power, when they have thus a ſenſe of their own importance?

My fancy had portrayed the reality of this deſcription, and I conſidered the original as Miſs Cathneſs. The figure of my fairy dream appeared to be realiſed—I contemplated her form, her manner—our eyes encountered each other with a faſcination of mutual rupture.

The aſſiduity of Lady Hales and Lady Dorothy did not admit of my immediate approach, and I ſtood at a diſtance in a maze of admiration. My name I heard mentioned. Lady Champignion had propoſed we ſhould dance the third minuet.

I now

I now advanced, took my ſeat beſide her, commenced ſome topic on the common occurrences of the day — her countenance I again obſerved to change. There was diſtreſs, an evident ſign of confuſion in her manner. My ſurpriſe increaſed — I conſidered her features — compared them with thoſe of Fanny Underwood — the reſemblance the moſt undiſputed—yet a face more woman-like—more caſt with dignity and grace. I had heard of ſtrong ſimilitudes which had deceived the moſt wary and collected minds; and I forebore any attempt to unravel my perplexity.

Philpot I expected ſoon to arrive, and the develloppment I then conſidered at no great diſtance—but irreſiſtible my curioſity —it ſeemed almoſt in vain for me to withhold my anxious deſire to queſtion her— I ſurveyed Lady Cathneſs—endeavoured to trace a likeneſs to Philpot—to think her Mrs. Gordon—but the contrivance of the plot ſtaggered my conjecture, and I now dwelt upon the poſſibility of a perfect reſemblance, with the neceſſity of identity.

Fanny

Fanny had blond hair, and a carnative not very deep. Miſs Cathneſs's hair of a brown tint; her colour more heightened; farde on an artificial heat, occaſioned by company, might have cauſed this difference—yet the turn, the ſymmetry of the features, the voice, the ſame. But in others reſpects, even with the advantage of her Pariſian education, which I had alſo thrown into the balance, there was the greateſt diſproportion in the manner. A form ſo ſuperior, ſo perfectly accompliſhed, collected, and flexible in manner, announced the female, trained from her early youth in the conſtant habit of refined manners.

With theſe conceptions I directed my diſcourſe on general topics, and ſuppreſſed my ſtill-riſing ſuſpicions.

The unconcern of Lady Cathneſs, her introduction, the aſſumption of her name, her perſonal acquaintance with ſeveral perſons in the room, averted alſo my ſuſpicions of a deceit. I alſo conſidered the imprudence of truſting herſelf in public, when

when there was an evident appearance of a violence meditated on the ſide of Fitz-Morris. All things conſidered, it was impoſſible that my ideas could be ſettled, ſo as to make out the poſſibility of a deception.

The minuets now began—the eyes of the room were fixed upon us—it had been given out we were to be partners. Our turn came—we ſtood up—ſhe called a minuet; but when the muſic played, when ſhe began the ſtep, more real elegance and enchanting grace could never have been diſplayed. As we moved round the room, how eaſy to perceive the approbation of the croud! Her ſtep had all the powers of a profeſſed dancer, withheld by the eaſe of ſuperior elegance; and it was now I began to increaſe in doubt. Where could Scotland find a maſter for this pupil? I had ſkill enough to diſcern that ſhe had received leſſons from a *ballet* maſter of the firſt ſkill. My admiration was uncommonly heightened, and I led her to her ſeat, perfectly convinced ſhe was the moſt beautiful and

accom-

accompliſhed girl I had ever ſeen in public company.

I had not been ſeated many minutes before I beheld Doctor Philpot enter the room, with a youth under his arm dreſſed in the height of faſhion.

After having firſt preſented him to Lady Champignion, they advanced to Sir Simon, who was at the other end of the room, and to whom he was introduced by the Doctor.

On the other ſide of Mrs. Gordon was ſeated Lady Dorothy; next to her, my mother, Lady Hales, and my ſiſter Sophia. The young man was ſoon joined by ſeveral officers of the guards; and Jekyll, whom I ſaw in the ſet, coming up to me, deſired a few words apart.

"Hales," ſays he, "I'll be d——d if "Doctor Philpot has not brought upon "the town an old acquaintance of ours."

I was juſt riſing to ſee Philpot, and to queſtion

queſtion him concerning the important buſineſs which had hurried my ſpirits to ſuch an alarming ſuſpenſe, when approaching the groupe of young beaux, who, to my ſtill wondering eyes, ſhould preſent himſelf but my old friend Samuel, and deliverer from the hands of the Paris ruffians. I immediately joined him, and, taking him by the hand, drew him aſide—my father all this while keeping at a little diſtance from us. I now queſtioned him on his leaving me at Amiens ſo abruptly, and his apparent cold conduct when Cornwall had attacked me. To this he anſwered, "the "time is not far diſtant when the myſtery "ſhall be cleared up. I beſeech you to "ſuppreſs your curioſity; perhaps much "intereſting buſineſs may depend on the "prudence of the preſent moment." He told me the Doctor had purchaſed him a commiſſion in the guards, and that he had been favourably received by the corps.

Sir Simon now came up to Samuel, and, taking him by the arm, preſented him to Lady

Lady Hales firſt, then to Lady Dorothy, and afterwards to Lady and Miſs Cathneſs.

Sophia now diſcovered emotions of a marked ſuſpenſe—her eyes inquiſitely fixed on Samuel.

My mother had not the moſt diſtant remembrance of Samuel, nor could ſhe, under his preſent unembarraſſed and well-bred appearance, diſcover the leaſt traits of the ſon of my old foſter nurſe.

He begged permiſſion to engage my ſiſter for a country dance, and which Lady Hales and Sophia acquieſced in; he then retired towards the Doctor, and reſumed his converſations with the officers—ſeveral of whom were of his corps.

The appearance of Samuel, and thus noticed by Sir Simon, could not fail to give me the clue for the devellopment of this myſtery. I now conſidered Miſs Cathneſs as Fanny Underwood, and I was in doubt whether I ſhould inſtantly approach her,

with a view to raiſe the maſk, or to begin the attack firſt on Doctor Philpot—but to add ſtill to my aſtoniſhment, who ſhould enter the room that inſtant but the Count de Montauban, introduced by a nobleman of conſiderable rank and figure.

I had juſt left the part of the room where I had accoſted Samuel, and was moving towards the ſeat I had left by the ſide of Miſs Cathneſs, when, obſerving the Doctor in chat with a ſtranger, who, to my ſtill greater amazement, ſhould I behold but Fitz-Morris, who had placed himſelf in my ſeat, and commenced an animated converſation, to the apparent terror and diſtreſs of this lady and her mother. Doctor Philpot being at no great diſtance, I immediately joined him, and, with energy, I queſtioned him concerning Miſs Cathneſs—inſiſting on his immediately declaring to me the ſituation of Fanny. He read ſtrong ſuſpicion in my countenance—he ſaw me ready to diſcover the plot.

" Behold,"

" Behold," ſays he, " the girl of your " early choice.

" This contrivance has been carried on " to remove the prejudice of your mother " and Lady Dorothy Murray—how far we " have ſucceeded muſt be left to the iſſue " of this night. I ſee in the room Fitz- " Morris and Montauban. I confeſs my " alarms on their appearance; yet, in this " public company, I do not doubt but we " ſhall be able to ſhield ourſelves from any " confuſion which may ariſe from that " quarter. They could have had no no- " tice of my ſiſter's appearance here with " Frances, and I ſhould rather ſuſpect " that Fitz-Morris's diſcovery of them " muſt have ariſen from mere chance.

" As to their being at the ball, it was " natural to ſuppoſe that every ſtranger of " rank would receive either an invitation, " or be introduced to a lady of ſuch diſ- " tinguiſhed faſhion as Lady Champig- " nion on a night of this public reception " of company. Beſides, as they have

" now been in England theſe three weeks,
" it was natural to ſuppoſe Montauban had
" been introduced to her ladyſhip; and as
" to the other, he, doubtleſs, was ac-
" quainted with her in the courſe of his
" rank and connections."

What impreſſion this elucidation of the ſcene made upon me, I muſt leave to the nice diſſecters of the human heart to divine. Suffice it to ſay, that I had not the power of paſſing one comment—of expreſſing either my ſatisfaction or pain—I gazed with a look of confounded aſtoniſhment on the Doctor; and I ſeemed never to have been ſo much in want of a friend to direct, or to govern my motions as at this inſtant.

Philpot obſerved the confuſion of my ideas—the multiplicity of objects I was engaged in—the embarraſſed predicament to which I was expoſed.

" To ſay, Edward, how we are to ſuc-
" ceed, or to unite the apparent diſcordant

" prejudices which are ſet up againſt us,
" exceeds my foreſight — we muſt truſt all
" to the fate of this evening.

" I have noted the approach of Samuel
" to your ſiſter Sophia — you have, doubt-
" leſs, already divined, that the ſame im-
" pulſe of genuine affection which inſpired
" you with that angelic object now in your
" ſight, had its influence over your ſiſter's
" heart. This was perceived by Sir Simon
" — You know the offers Sophia has re-
" jected — The delicacy of the female
" mind has made her ſuffer with patience,
" but not unobſerved by your vigilant and
" ſkilful parent. Watch and perceive the
" effect of natural paſſion — balance that
" of Samuel and Sophia with your own for
" his twin ſiſter Frances. This paſſion,
" like yours, was encouraged.

" The greateſt addreſs poſſible has been
" adopted by Sir Simon — But mark me,
" Edward, this encouragement of natural
" tie has been cheriſhed for the eſtabliſh-
" ment of the perfect happineſs of his

" children. A wiſe and deep-judging " parent has ſpurned at the abhorred ſacri- " fices which have been made to worldly " convenience—to the caprice and aſſort- " ment of family pride. The ſucceſs, " perhaps, difficult—perhaps impractica- " ble to achieve—but you ſee we are now " endeavouring to obtain it. We ſhall be " obliged to uſe the greateſt delicacy to- " wards Lady Hales; for unleſs we ac- " quire the moſt perfect conformity on her " ſide, Sir Simon will experience nothing " but miſery and perplexity hereafter. " The plan is novel, Edward; and you " muſt confeſs, that hitherto we have ad- " vanced our ſcheme almoſt to perfec- " tion."

Fitz-Morris now roſe, and I obſerved his eyes traverſing the room; at laſt they were fixed on me and the Doctor—at this inſtant he made towards us.

We had not exchanged a word ſince the rupture between us, on his baſe attempt to ſeduce Fanny.

" Sir,"

" Sir," he thus addreſſed me, " I have
" been led into an affair which might have
" terminated fatally on the ſide of one or
" two perſons, who are now in the room,
" if my good fortune had not diſcovered
" the truth of your honourable and firm
" attachment to the moſt amiable young
" lady (for ſo I muſt now call her) that
" my eyes ever beheld. My time, Sir,
" for theſe ſeveral years paſt, has been di-
" vided between England and France.
" On my laſt tour to Paris, to viſit my fa-
" ther, I was ſtruck with great ſurpriſe in
" being introduced at the Count de Mon-
" tauban's to a Mrs. Gordon and her
" niece.

" There was a marked diſorder in the
" young lady when my name was men-
" tioned, and the greateſt reluctance diſ-
" covered when I propoſed to pay my re-
" ſpects to the mother during my reſidence
" in Paris, but which I, at the moment,
" attributed to ſome peculiar cauſe of fe-
" male delicacy.

" The aſſiduities to pleaſe the niece, " on the ſide of the young Count de " Montauban, were not unobſerved by " the family, as well as friends of the " Count; and as Mrs. Gordon had always " been received as a lady of rank, as well " as conſiderable fortune, he was not re- " ſtrained from his gallantry.

" In the morning following, being with " one of my moſt intimate acquaintance at " Paris, he called on me to accompany him " on a viſit to Mrs. Gordon. This I ac- " cepted. His face being known by the " ſervant, we were immediately admitted " without ſending in our names. Confu- " ſion and terror were now diſcovered in " the niece. Her diſhabille diſcovered to " me another perſon to what I had ſeen on " the over-night, equally beautiful, though " not ſo much diſguiſed by faſhion, or a " more ſumptuous attire. The agitation " of Miſs Gordon increaſed—I gazed on " her face—I recogniſed the lovely " daughter of your father's tenant.

" I con-

" I contrived to reveal myſelf, and to " calm the ſtill-increaſing terror of the " charming object which you had pre- " ſerved from the levity of my youth— " I increaſed my reſpect — Miſs Under- " wood became more tranquil — I con- " cealed the event from Montauban—We " took our leave—The Count entertained " no ſuſpicions ſhe had been of my ac- " quaintance.

" On my return to my hotel I called " for pen, ink, and paper, and wrote a " note to the following purpoſe: ——

" That I was undoubtedly much " amazed in meeting ſo unexpectedly a " young lady whom my former raſhneſs " and miſinformation had tempted to uſe " with ſo much unworthineſs—that I had " now an opportunity of making an atone- " ment for the offered inſult; and if ſhe " would admit of my viſit, the moſt ſo- " lemn proteſtation ſhould be given of my " honourable affection."

" In ſhort, I had heard from Montau-
" ban that her beauty and accompliſh-
" ments had engaged the admiration of
" the firſt people of diſtinction; and, cap-
" tivated with her perſon and manners, I
" was reſolved to make a reparation for the
" wrongs I had meditated.

" To ſtrengthen theſe views, I had heard
" before I left England, that you was en-
" gaged with Miſs Cornwall.

" To this addreſs I received no anſwer.
" On the day following I went to the houſe
" of Mrs. Gordon—I found ſhe was gone
" —I had intelligence of the route they
" had taken—I was determined to follow
" them—to throw myſelf at the feet of the
" woman, whom the levity of my youth
" had tempted to offer an injury.

" In this place then, Sir, have I found
" them.

" I am informed of the groundleſs re-
" port

" port of your engagement with Miſs
" Cornwall.

" Montauban, I preſume, is arrived on
" the ſame commiſſion as myſelf.

" I have heard the truth—the reality of
" your attachment from the lips of the
" fineſt female my eyes ever beheld.
" Your peace, Sir, cannot be invaded by
" a man who has a ſenſe of honour.—Be
" happy then, Mr. Hales, in this ami-
" able young woman. She is an orna-
" ment to title and fortune—to the king-
" dom which has given her birth."

THE BALL CONTINUED.

To recover the maid of my early choice, under circumſtances ſo remarkable and flattering, raiſed in me a kind of romantic delight. Had I been reading an Arabian tale, the impreſſion could not have been more apparently marvellous.

But the moment of revealing myſelf was now big ſwelling in my heart. We were engaged to dance country dances. The ſet was forming itſelf. My father I noted in converſation with Lady Cathneſs, now Mrs. Gordon. I flew to the lovely Frances —She had anticipated my intentions—her inquiſitive eye had been fixed on me from the time Fitz-Morris had left her, who, doubtleſs, had declared his reſolution of divulging her perſon.

As I approached, ſhe thus addreſſed me:

" I have no words to deſcribe the con-
" fuſion and alarm which oppreſs me—
" how ſhall I excuſe this unworthy diſ-
" guiſe?"——

Sir Simon at this critical moment came to me, and finding the diſcovery had taken place, cried out, " Edward, for God's ſake, " have prudence—we ſhall all be ruined, " if you do not counterfeit the greateſt in-" difference."

Mrs. Gordon now interrupted us, by expreſſing her fears on the appearance of Montauban. She openly declared, that ſhe had but too favourably countenanced the aſſiduity of the Count to render himſelf acceptable to Frances. My apparent attachment to Miſs Cornwall, and indifference to Frances, had made her conclude my affection had been leſſened by abſence. The Count's extreme attention, his family and fortune, had inclined her to flatter him with hopes of ſucceſs by a perſeverance of addreſſes,

addreſſes, and that ſhe had, doubtleſs, uſed many arguments to perſuade her lovely companion to accept of them. It only remained for an explanation to take place on her ſide with the Count, and ſhe therefore made no doubt but he would be readily inclined to forego that perſeverance which could have no grounds from the preſent appearance to flatter him with ſucceſs.

By this time the Count had diſcovered Mrs. Gordon and Frances.

It was inſtantly judged prudent for Mrs. Gordon to riſe and meet him. He heard a circumſtantial relation of my engagement—but to this he did not give much attention, and conſidered it only as an excuſe to cover her artifice in transferring her preference to me, and inſiſted on receiving his diſmiſſion from the mouth of Fanny herſelf.

The appearance of the Count was peculiarly whimſical to attract the general notice of the room; and this did not add a little to our embarraſſment.

He

He had been introduced to Lady Champignion by Lord Shelldrake, a nobleman of conſiderable faſhion and figure, extremely whimſical in his conduct, and who had, to excite ridicule at the expence of Montauban, dreſſed him, under pretence of Engliſh faſhion, in the moſt prepoſterous manner.

At Paris it was the prevailing faſhion for the morning undreſs to conſiſt of an Engliſh frock, ſtriped waiſtcoat, round hat, leather breeches, boots, ſpurs, and a jemmy twitcher in the hand, which the French ſtiled *à la Jockai Anglois*.

His Lordſhip aſſured Montauban, that he could not diſplay his knowledge of Engliſh faſhion more to advantage than thus to appear *à la Jockai* at the ball of her Ladyſhip. This he readily gave into, from a thorough conviction that faſhion, in his own country, reconciled the greateſt contradiction, and that it was no unuſual ſight for many of his countrymen to be thus equipped

equipped who had never mounted a horſe in their lives.

To this whim of the noble Lord, to render his friend highly ridiculous and ſingular, muſt be aſcribed the general remarks of the company on his perſon. Whether this had been noticed by him, and which had chafed his temper, or whether the diſcourſe of Mrs. Gordon had concurred to the ſame effect, he very abruptly ſhot from her, and inſtantly approached me.

Fanny had been inſtructed by Mrs. Gordon in the riſque I had run, on her account, of loſing my life, as well on the ſide of the Count as of Cornwall, from which latter affair I was ſcarcely recovered, now trembled, and expreſſed her alarms in the greateſt agitation of mind and body.

He now addreſſed himſelf to Fanny—"*Mademoiſelle, vous êtes plus heureuſe apara-*"*ment auprés de Monſieur—Monſieur Hales*"*eſt certainement cheri.*"

Mrs.

Mrs. Gordon had openly explained to him the real truth of my engagement; but his mind, his fancy, having been heated by his gallant admiration, and fancying, perhaps, that ſo long a journey, in purſuit of the heroine of his adventure, was not to be thrown away by an eaſy acquieſcence to the above lady's remonſtrance, he ſeemed inclined to diſpute the privilege of intruding on the company of Frances all the night, or elſe of rendering himſelf extremely diſagreeable to Mrs. Gordon, or to me. Added to this, he appeared to have taken very copious libations of his Lordſhip's good wines, and it might therefore prove a diſproportionate conteſt to enter the liſts againſt ſuch a powerful adverſary, by diſputing victory under the banner of Venus and Bacchus. Wine in his head, and love in his heart, might render him deſperate in the extreme, and, at all events, cauſe a rupture in our plan before the ſcene of the drama was compleated.

Thus ſituated, I was determined on a ſtratagem—to requeſt Mrs. Gordon and

Fanny

Fanny to leave the room — on which I found no great difficulty, the Count underſtanding little or no Engliſh — therefore, engaging his converſation to myſelf, I had the pleaſure to ſee Mrs. Gordon and Fanny riſe, accompanied by Lady Hales, Lady Dorothy, and Sir Simon.

Montauban ſeemed inclined to riſe to follow them; but very opportunely, Lord Shelldrake walked up to us, accompanied by Fitz-Morris.

"*Par Dieu, Fitzmor,*" exclaimed the Count, "*La belle Angloiſe — Mon Ange du* "*Ciel! la voilà!*"

Lord Shelldrake, with whom I had a ſlight acquaintance, had heard from Fitz-Morris the hiſtory of my engagement with Fanny; and I could eaſily perceive by his manner, that he was more inclined to amuſe himſelf at the expence of the Count, than to encourage Montauban in a rupture; beſides, his turbulent and debauched character was too well known by both of them,

them, to incline them to ſuppoſe that he could be ſerious in his views of a matrimonial alliance; and they in conſequence would, perhaps from a ſimilarity of complection, diſſuade him from a farther purſuit, or, at leaſt, juſtify my pretenſions openly to his face.

In this I was not miſtaken, for I found that, apprehenſive of his puſhing the affair with too much violence, and knowing alſo that my own reſolute temper would cauſe me to reſiſt his meaſures, they perſuaded him to retire, under pretence that his dreſs had given a conſiderable degree of offence.

Montauban now fired againſt his Lordſhip, who, proteſting that he had only in jeſt propoſed his appearing *à la jockai*, not conſidering he meant ſeriouſly to appear in that dreſs, contrived to get his conſent for leaving the room; and eſpecially as a propoſition to a favourite party of play was made, he had no great heſitation—turning, therefore, to me, *moitié en plaiſanterie, moitié echauffé*——he declared I was the happieſt

pieſt man in the univerſe, if my rival would give up his pretenſions.

The three gentlemen now roſe, and I had the ſatisfaction to find Mrs. Gordon and Fanny had actually that moment taken their leave of Sir Simon and Lady Hales, and, without waiting for the announce of their carriage, had made their retreat.

Fitz-Morris and the Count advanced towards the dancers, and the eyes of the latter ſeemed inquiſitively peering round the room for the ladies, who had departed. Lord Shelldrake turned to me——

" Sir," ſay he, " I have heard from " Captain Fitz-Morris your very intereſt- " ing engagement with that beautiful " young lady. He has alſo informed me " of the innocent device of her friend, " who calls herſelf Lady Cathneſs, to re- " move the North-Britiſh family *hauteur* of " my old acquaintance, Lady Dorothy " Murray, your aunt, to force her into a " concurrence of matrimony between you

" and

" and your pretty lover, who has certainly
" riveted the general admiration of the
" men. On my ſoul, Mr. Hales, I think
" her by far the handſomeſt and moſt-ac-
" compliſhed girl in her perſon I ever be-
" held, and I do not wonder that this fu-
" rious French fellow is ſo much attracted
" —but do not have any alarms on his ac-
" count—I will take care to withdraw his
" attention from the romantic and mad
" ſcheme he ſeems to be embarked upon.
" An introduction to the circles of gal-
" lantry, where the favours of beautiful
" women can be purchaſed at a cheaper
" price than a wedding, will ſoon cure the
" frenzy of this libertine. As to the ſecret
" I am entruſted with from Mr. Fitz-
" Morris, you may be perſuaded, ſhall
" not eſcape me; and, in every other re-
" ſpect, I ſhall endeavour to be a party
" concerned in bringing about a union,
" which reflects ſo much honour on your
" excellent choice and inflexible attach-
" ment."

I returned his Lordſhip thanks for his friendly

friendly and very polite expreſſions of ſervice, and I left him to join my father and Philpot, who, I obſerved, were in a very earneſt and cloſe converſation.

The reſult of it was, the expediency of Mrs. Gordon and Fanny, ſtill under the feigned names of Lady Cathneſs and her daughter, ſhould accept of an invitation to Boxley—to ſet off immediately for that place—and as the ſeaſon was far advanced for leaving town, the plan would be twofold more acceptable for the family to break up the town reſidence. Lady Dorothy was to be of the party; and the ſcheme to take place under cover of Miſs Cathneſs having received ſeveral unpleaſant overtures from the Count of Montauban, who had been ſtruck with her perſon in ſeveral public places, and who had made a point of paying his attendance wherever he could diſcover her.

It was alſo to be ſignified to Lady Hales and Lady Dorothy, that this might prove the means of forwarding a match which

the

the whole family ſeemed ſo deſirous of being completed.

Mrs. Gordon and Fanny had made good their retreat. Lady Hales and Lady Dorothy had the plan opened to them. It was approved, and the reſt of the night ſeemed to paſs with uncommon good humour on the ſide of our family.

Samuel had been dancing with Sophia—the young couple were ſeated by the ſide of each other. The ſpirit and vivacity of the latter was lighted up—ſhe had long yielded herſelf to a mournful melancholy—the conſequence of a delicate and ſenſible mind, affected by an early and natural tenderneſs for the abſent object—that object was Samuel—no friend to impart the effect of a ſtrong impreſſion from the tender paſſion; it was reſerved for the vigilant eye of a ſagacious parent to diſcover the malady, and to adminiſter the remedy, though novel, yet efficacious in its nature.

When the lovers firſt met, all was reſerve, ſilence,

—ſilence, and the greateſt ſurpriſe, on the ſide of Sophia. On the ſide of Samuel, reſpect, tinctured with an aſcendant manner of grace and faſhion. He had received inſtructions from Philpot; and, under the ſanction of Sir Simon, he at once found his inclinations gratified, and his ambition diſplayed.

There is an aſpiring ſpirit naturally implanted in our ſex, which operates, when rendered tributary to judgement and diſcretion, the moſt ſucceſsful effects—it partakes of a more bold, a leſs daunted complection; and a man, even naturally of the moſt docile temper, will, on the trying events of life, rouſe himſelf to the completion of the moſt exalted virtue.

Herein the character of Samuel ſeemed to be particularly defined. Philpot found his diſpoſition naturally docile, but vigorous. He opened to him the favourable opinion which Sir Simon entertained of his affection for Sophia, but he convinced him of the little chance he had of ſucceeding

to

to the ſummit of his wiſhes, unleſs he qualified himſelf with every neceſſary endowment to render his introduction into life, and this completion of his happineſs with the young lady, whoſe affections he had been ſo fortunate to engage, commenſurate with the accuſtomary forms and uſages of life.

The ambition of Samuel wanted no ſtimulus—the prize was too conſiderable not to ſpur his reſolution in the moſt eminent degree, and Philpot found him equally induſtrious to practiſe, as pliant to receive implicitly every counſel which he tranſmitted him. Thus he ſoon acquired a worldly poliſh and adequate ſentiments of high notions of honour and virtue.

He had been informed of my engagement with his ſiſter, and, with ſimilar hopes of ſucceſs, he found a ſtimulus to the moſt active principles of virtue which could poſſibly animate the breaſt of a young man. He had, before his reſidence at Douay to accompliſh him in military knowledge,

been recommended by Philpot to the care of a celebrated profeſſor in one of the colleges at Louvain, where he had paſſed three years in the ſtricteſt application to academical ſtudies of a nature polite, varied, and not confined to any particular profeſſional plan.

The ſentiments of Philpot were rather inclining to a ſenſe of equalization, more than an infallible conformity to the Divine right of ſuperiority in ſtation. The levelling principle of the Puritans he utterly rejected from his creed—it was not, he ſaid, the depreſſion of the externals of human grandeur he reprobated, but the internal pride of heart which induced one man to conſider himſelf ſuperior to another. Subordination to the higher powers he moſt ſcrupulouſly admitted as the bond of all civil ſociety, but the pure, the unſullying ſentiments of the heart, rendered every man naturally equal.

" Act well yourt part"——

This

This he conſtantly aſſerted was the principle which rendered every man naturally and internally equal—and with this unerring power he aſſerted, the leaſt might face the greateſt, on the eſſential of natural right. It was the baſis of his doctrine to Samuel in the ſyſtem of his education, and his letters were always tinctured with it.

From theſe ſentiments, therefore, Samuel was influenced when he drew back reluctantly from my propoſition of his being my ſecond in the affair of George Cornwall. He had conſidered my attention to his ſiſter under the moſt ſolemn of all human obligation — my engagement with Miſs Cornwell, as derogating from the ſtrictneſs of thoſe moral principles of virtue which he had imbibed; and though he had received from Philpot orders to depart inſtantly for England after his ſiſter, and to prepare Sir Simon in private for their arrival, he was reſolved in his mind to place an inſurmountable barrier between my union with Frances, though at the ſame time he knew that I broke with Miſs Cornwall for the

purpoſe of fulfilling my original engagement with her.

Other ſentiments alſo had introduced themſelves to a mind thus ſcrupulouſly educated. He had alſo reſolved on withdrawing himſelf from the protection of Sir Simon and Philpot, and of diſclaiming the tender intercourſe with Sophia. The compact of my conſtant affection for his ſiſter, Frances, he conſidered as a ſimilar ratification of the one which his heart had made with Sophia, ſhould ſhe continue the ſame natural impreſſion equally perfect or unimpaired—and his virtue in the conteſt would have effectually triumphed over his ſelfiſh and tender feelings.

He had ſtrength of mind, or inflexible virtue, to return to the plough, or to arm himſelf with a muſket for the ſervice of his country—and Roman courage to plunge a dagger into the breaſt of his ſiſter, if the natural weakneſs of her ſex had made her flexible to the renewal of my importunities for an honourable union.

On the arrival of Philpot, the heroic ſentiments of his pupil thus burſt forth, to his pleaſure and great ſurpriſe :

" Sir," ſays he, " I am in doubt whe-
" ther to bleſs or curſe the hand which has
" raiſed me from humble ignorance to this
" diſcontented ſtation in life. Am I to
" purchaſe an elevated rank by the union
" in the family of Sir Simon Hales, with
" the total loſs of my conſcience—the ſelf
" approbation of my heart? Am I to
" claſp a man to my breaſt, however ſupe-
" rior in rank, as my friend, whoſe con-
" duct I reprobate, whoſe character de-
" ſerves execration from every good man?
" No, Sir; in this inſtance the eaſe and
" affluence of life muſt be indebted to a
" baſe conformity to the vices of my friend
" and a paltry ſilence, when my own fa-
" mily injury cries loudly for my reſent-
" ment. Has he not betrayed the affec-
" tions of an amiable young lady? Has
" he not betrayed the pledge of eternal
" conſtancy to my ſiſter, to the object

" which his caprice again as wantonly ſa-
" crifices?

" With this ductility of mind, my alli-
" ance with Miſs Hales, if approved, if
" ſanctioned by reciprocal affection, will
" be conſtrued by all the family into the
" moſt deteſtable of all ſordid gratifica-
" tions, convenience, pride."

" Her beauty, her amiable qualities,
" could, perhaps, avert ſome portion of
" this cenſure, but enough would fall to
" ſerve me as an indelible curſe. The
" virtue of Mr. Hales, Doctor, would
" have been the ſhield of my enemies;
" and the ſame plaudit might have proved
" my conſolation in the hazardous moment
" of my future happineſs. No, Sir; I am
" reſolved. Mr. Hales is guilty, and I
" muſt recover from the fatal deluſion of
" my ambitious views."

The Doctor now embraced him, de-
lighted with the moral perceptions of his
pupil, and explained to him the arts which
had

had been uſed in the family of Mr Cornwall to ſeduce my affections from Fanny; and having demonſtrated the natural conſequence of long abſence from a young and ſanguine temparament, Samuel, from unſhaken confidence in the Doctor, whom he was certain would not, on any conſideration, adviſe him to a meaſure which might either threaten his future happineſs, or the loſs of his virtue, inclined him to change his ſentiments.

Fragment of the Doctor's letter to Samuel on entering life; and Sir Simon's diſcovery of Samuel's attachment to his daughter.

" You will find, on your introduction " into life, a ſet of men who boaſt of a no- " ble deſcent, and with whom, in all pro- " bability, you will rank as an aſſociate. " Among this claſs of people you will " note many who acquire a kind of ſu- " preme command in ſociety, by virtue of " their rank alone, unaccompanied with " either talents or virtue; and ſuch is the " prevalence of cuſtom in a mixed govern-

" ment, that they will take the lead of " thoſe who, wanting the former, have " only the latter to pave their way to " ſucceſs.

" To this arbitrary law ſociety is obliged " to ſubmit—and men of equal merit muſt " patiently ſuffer the partial diſtributions " of rewards and patronage. Family and " connections will ſuperſede talents and " virtue without them. But never fail to for- " get, that it is by theſe qualities alone you " can be admitted into that ſuperior order " of the ſtate. The gentleman is the man of " worth, of virtue, as well as of an accom- " pliſhed education; and while your cha- " racter is thus untainted with the vulgar " vices of the age, the awe of nobility " and birth ſhould not influence your con- " duct. It is this, then, which will put " you on equality — render reſpect where " reſpect is due, but by no means ſuffer the " noble qualities of a virtuous, well-diſci- " plined, and enlarged mind, to be con- " troled by the imaginary ſuperiority of " birth without thoſe qualities.

" When

" When you mix with your ſuperiors,
" never fail to ſhew your conformity to
" that poſitive good which ſociety has eſta-
" bliſhed; but at the ſame time preſerve
" your open, manlike, and independant
" ſentiments, free from any ſlaviſh re-
" ſtraint. Let your arguments be always
" conducted with ſpirit, but not with a
" vain diſplay of the favourite talents
" which you cultivate—if well informed,
" and you are called upon to aſſert your
" privilege in ſocial converſe, let no im-
" preſſions of ſuperior rank avert the free-
" dom and integrity of your argument—
" Argue to be convinced, but not with a
" ſpirit of ſelf-importance to triumph in
" the defeat of your opponent by ſophiſtry
" and vain conceit of ſuperior abilities."

Peritum orno, imperitum dedecoro.

In ſhort, Samuel had returned to England well informed by the Doctor in the rule of his conduct, and hitherto he had engaged the affections of every perſon with whom he had converſed.

The progreſs of his attachment to Sophia was mutual from the time of their meeting in the temple, in the roſe-tree grove; and when my purſuit and reſcue of his ſiſter had reached the ear of the latter, ſhe had, on the ſame premiſes of my reſolute intentions to marry Frances, flattered her own natural inclination with ſimilar hopes.

The early friendſhip of children had evidently matured itſelf to a more ſerious and tender paſſion; and while Samuel was ſedulous only in ſhewing that regard which his friendſhip for me induced him to make to Sophia in my abſence, the young people found themſelves diſpoſed to entertain a more intimate and perſonal impulſe.

In conſequence of her having been diſcovered in the temple with Samuel, ſhe had received many lectures from Lady Hales, which, though highly decorous and juſtly framed with an eye to her future intereſt, had not the deſired end of obliterating the early

early impreſſion which ſhe had received. But what time, and a variety of objects in the faſhionable theatre of life, might have affected, an accident preſented itſelf which cauſed Sophia to decide on the object on whom her laſting affections were to be placed.

On the firſt ſummer of my reſidence at Cambridge, young Jekyll, on a viſit at Boxley, had every opportunity of paying his addreſſes to Sophia — it was a ſcheme of my mother's contrivance to bring about a plan, on which ſhe had for a conſiderable time beſtowed many anxious thoughts. Their perſonal interviews were encouraged, and every opportunity thrown in their way to accelerate the deſired plan of Lady Hales.

The temple in the roſe-tree grove had often attracted the ſteps of Sophia—a walk in the grounds had been propoſed, and it was to this ſpot ſhe had invited Mr. Jekyll.

Samuel had, perhaps, from the ſame ſympathy of feeling, ſtole where once his heart had experienced the pure charms of early friendſhip. The object removed, a mournful tenderneſs had invited him from time to time to viſit the ſpot, and ruminate on thoſe ſcenes which his remembrance had fondly traced.

Sir Simon Hales had there frequently diſcovered him in his walks, and, far from diſcouraging his viſits to the temple, had taken that opportunity of entering into a diſcourſe with him; finding him a youth of an amiable temper, of a genius more delicate and improved than ruſtics in his ſituation, had ſpoken to Doctor Philpot to perſuade his father to beſtow a more enlarged education upon him—and to which Underwood had, with great difficulty, complied, by providing him with the advantage of a ſchool, kept at a ſmall diſtance from Oldthorpe by a pariſh clerk, where Samuel had acquired the rudiments of that knowledge which the care of Philpot had,

in

in the courſe of a few years, ripened to ſo much advantage.

It happened on the ſame ſummer afternoon that Samuel had ſtrolled to the favourite grove, to offer an incenſe to a hopeleſs paſſion, when he perceived Jekyll and Sophia making a turn into the curve of the walk which led to the temple— His approach was not perceived when they entered it—his heart, for the firſt time in his life, now experienced a pang which raiſed up in him a reſentment againſt the object, who appeared to receive that preference of favour which he would have given an empire to poſſeſs.

Curioſity, perhaps jealouſy, which the remembrance of the delicious moments of childiſh rapture had for the moment excited, cauſed him to ſteal gently to the back part of the temple—there he placed himſelf to hear a converſation which, in all probability, would cauſe the moſt keen impreſſion of diſtreſs—to hear a reciprocal exchange of the tender paſſion. To aſpire

to the fair object of his wiſhes, was a diſtant, far diſtant thought from his mind; but the heart could not ſo ſoon deface its early impreſſion; and though he might, perhaps, conceive the greateſt agony, in hearing the mutual intercourſe of the lovers, ſtill he felt an increaſe of rapture in being near the object of his deſires, and liſtening to her converſation.

Jekyll had now begun his overtures——

"Miſs Hales, ſhall we be married ſoon? "I am very deſirous to have the cere- "mony over; and, you know, when we "have both pleaſed our mama's, we may "then pleaſe ourſelves."

Sophia replied, that ſhe did not conſider the courtſhip as begun; and to talk of matrimony before the parties had given their conſent, was taking a liberty that he was not entitled to. She now began to turn the diſcourſe to another object; but Jekyll, in reply, obſerved, that if the courtſhip was not begun, it ſhould not be his fault—and

he

he immediately proceeded to put his hands round her neck to kiſs her. She deſired him to deſiſt from his rudeneſs; but he conceiving, perhaps, that the rules of gallantry would not admit of ſuch an eaſy defect, continued to preſs, while ſhe as obſtinately repelling his offers, at laſt was obliged to call out for help—when Samuel, burſting from behind the temple, preſented himſelf before them.

Jekyll immediately ſprung up, and threatened to lay a ſtick over his ſhoulders, which he had in his hand. Samuel, turning to Miſs Hales, begged to know if ſhe wiſhed him to ſtay by her; if not, her commands ſhould be obeyed, and he would immediately retire.

By all means, ſhe replied, and declared that Mr. Jekyll's conduct was ſo unjuſtifiable that ſhe would not walk back again with him to the houſe. Jekyll's anger was now moſt violently chafed, and he put himſelf in a poſture to drive Samuel out of the ſummer houſe, who thus replied:

"If

" If you ſtrike me, Mr. Jekyll, I will " defend myſelf, you may be aſſured."

Jekyll, not accuſtomed to control, and to hear a ſimilar language from an inferior, raiſed his ſtick, which the former wrenched out of his hand, declaring, that he ſhould now take upon him to convey Miſs Hales home; and that if he attempted to inſult her, or him, he would be her defender to the laſt drop of his blood.

Jekyll, in a violent guſt of paſſion, dropped many threats that he would acquaint Lady Hales with her conduct, and at the ſame time made uſe of ſeveral inſulting expreſſions that Samuel was more acceptable than himſelf, and that he ſhould not ſcruple to alledge, that ſhe was acceſſary to their being ſurpriſed. He ſtill made ſeveral attempts to drive Samuel off, but whoſe reſolute demeanor made Jekyll think it the wiſeſt plan to leave Sophia in his poſſeſſion, and to follow them at a diſtance to the houſe.

When ſhe arrived, ſhe went immediately into her room, and Lady Hales very ſoon afterwards obſerving her confuſed ſtate of mind, queſtioned her as to the cauſe. Her anſwers were unreſerved, and ſhe boldly declared the nature of Jekyll's inſult and Samuel's interference.

Her Ladyſhip's violence, on this declaration, knew no bounds, and ſhe immediately charged her with entertaining a low and mean partiality for this young man—to the diſgrace of her family, and her own ſhameful diſhonour.

Sir Simon was now applied to, and the affair, perhaps, not a little exaggerated—however, he appeared to enter entirely into the views of Lady Hales—but ſecretly rejoiced to find his daughter had repulſed Jekyll, and that he had ſuch favourable hopes for the fracture of an alliance in that family, which of all things was what he had always deteſted.

The generous and truly philoſophic ſpirit

rit of the Baronet led him to apprehend a ſecret intercourſe had been carried on between Sophia and Samuel; and, to forward a ſimilar ſcheme to that of his ſon Edward, he prevailed on Sophia to open her heart to him. The reſult was, that Philpot had been engaged to perſuade Underwood to reſign his ſon to his care, and to adopt the plan which the Baronet had concerted for the happineſs of his children.

But the reſentment of Lady Hales increaſed, and ſhe inſiſted that Samuel, as being inſtrumental to the diſguſt which Mr. Jekyll had taken, and to the gaining of her daughter's affection, ſhould be diſpatched out of the country. The father, therefore, was to be applied to; but by the ſagacity of Philpot the affair was ſettled to the entire ſatisfaction of her Ladyſhip, and to the forwarding of the plot of Sir Simon. Lady Hales was taught to believe that he had enliſted for a ſoldier, and was actually departed for America—her fears therefore became, in a very ſhort time, tranquiliſed.

THE INTERVIEW OF MR. HALES AND FANNY.

Mr. Hales is mentioned in the third perſon—perhaps from the Doctor's notes.

LADY Hales was delighted with the new acquaintance ſhe had formed with Lady and Miſs Cathneſs; and Lady Dorothy as much rejoiced at the thoughts of her nephew having conceived ſo great a partiality for her favourite Scotch nation. Her fortune and intereſt ſhe had promiſed to beſtow on Edward, and every gratuity in her power to render the *kaunection* delightful and magnificent.

Samuel had been introduced under ſuch a diſſimilar feature of original character, that

that Lady Hales had not the leaſt recollection of his perſon; and Jekyll, who could undertake to undeceive her, had, for a conſiderable time, dropped his viſits at her houſe — But to put this matter out of all doubt, it was determined that Edward ſhould enjoin him to ſecreſy, which could be very eaſily effected from the awe which he was under to him, doubtleſs not forgetting the chaſtiſement he had once received from his hands on a former occaſion.

MEETING OF THE LOVERS.

The morning after the ball Mr. Hales payed his viſit to Mrs. Gordon and Fanny.

The meeting of two abſent lovers recall thoſe melting moments of exquiſite fondneſs which human nature is ſuſceptible of in its moſt favoured ſituations. He now beheld

beheld the girl whom his desires, and even difficult ambition, had at those intervals suggested when the first-chosen object of the heart is removed from sight, and the passions laid open to the assails of caprice and criminal disorder. In her he now found were united the qualities of tender and reflected love—her mind enlightened to convey instruction. Manners equally polished to shine in the croud of fashion, or in the domestic duties of retirement — or the calm stations of life, where the charms of a family transcend the noise, the pomp of town pleasure—Nature had organised her soul to the reception of truth in every condition where she was placed — Nature had supremely favoured her with this discernment, and which a refined and delicate instruction, in the prevailing accomplishments of life, had heightened to an uncommon degree.

Mr. Hales had thus an opportunity to converse with her, and the greatest part of the morning had been passed in his desire to investigate her true character — to make choice

choice of a partner, with whom he was to paſs the remainder of his days.

At a period ſo early to embark on this precarious voyage, demanded an impartial ſcrutiny.

In the ornamental qualifications of life, he found her enlightened very far beyond his expectations.

Muſic and drawing were the favourite ſtudies ſhe had cultivated during her four years reſidence in Paris. In the former ſcience ſhe exhibited a critical knowledge of the beſt maſters. She could diſcourſe on the grandeur and exalted harmony of Handel, and applaud the beautiful ſimplicity and natural compoſition of Gluck. The tender beauties of Giardini ſhe could imitate in her own compoſitions, while thoſe of the more ſcientific and correct Correlli ſhe performed with execution and taſte. Her inſtruments were the harp and the harpſichord. The beſt of maſters had given her inſtructions. The politeſt con-

certs

certs in Paris had enriched her judgement, and ſtrengthened her ear. She had thus every talent to gain her applauſe in the croud of public life, but had a mind framed to prefer the more retired and calm pleaſures to the moſt diſtinguiſhed applauſe.

Her manners were tinctured more with foreign breeding, than of the beſt company in her own country; and the pronunciation of her words had partaken of a foreign accent. Perhaps this might ſerve to give her the better colour for aſſuming a feigned character.

In ſhort, Mr. Hales was convinced that his heart could not have made a better election; and he congratulated himſelf on the ſucceſs of his plan in thus training to perfection an object which natural paſſion had rendered ſo dear to him. The ſacrifices which he had made to an honourable firſt attachment, and the ordeal which he had ſuffered to prove his conſtancy, he now believed

believed to be amply balanced by the poſſeſſion of ſo rich a prize.

The tender teſtimony of Mrs. Gordon did not a little ſerve to increaſe his ardour; and as an indubitable proof of her love for the blooming Frances, ſhe had made her will in her favour, which, on her death, would amount to twenty thouſand pounds.

But Mr. Hales, when he entered the room, found Fanny in tears — they were wiped away to receive him; and their converſation had turned aſide the cauſe which he now earneſtly ſolicited to be inſtructed in.

She had received a letter from her father, who, expecting the arrival of his ſon and daughter, had written to them to haſten their journey to Oldthorpe.

It was drawn from her boſom, and, with a tear ſwelling in her eye, ſhe put it into his hand.

UNDERWOOD'S LETTER.

" Dear daughter,

" We have heard of both your arri-
" vals, with thanks to the Almighty for
" your preſervation.

" But we have had a ſad time of it
" ſince you and Samuel have left us. To
" be poor and happy, my dear, is the chief
" bleſſing of life. Poverty never draws
" upon it the envy of ſuperiors and equals
" —but we, to our misfortune, have ac
" quired the hatred and contempt of all
" the neighbourhood —- and the poor
" thatch has not experienced one happy
" moment ſince you have been gone.

" Reports have been ſpread to try ou
" patience, and to raiſe our indignation.

" Whenever I go to market I am ſure
" to ſee, as I paſs, the moſt uncivil ſneers;
" and men, who were once afraid to look
" me in the face, do not ſcruple now to
" affront me with their bold and ſaucy
" ſayings——Ay, ſays one, no wonder his
" bags are ſo full, and his barn ſo well
" ſtocked, when he has ſo well ſold his
" daughter to the old Baronet's ſon — And
" then another talks of Samuel being ſent
" out of the way, becauſe the young lady
" of the manor houſe fell in love with
" him. At church, if your mother puts
" on a clean cap, ſhe is ſure to be ſcoffed
" for her pride in ſtriving to be thought a
" fine lady. So that what with one thing
" and another we are doomed to live by
" ourſelves, as all our acquaintance ſhun
" and deſpiſe us.

" When firſt you left us, it was re-
" ported that Maſter Edward had made
" you a naughty woman — but theſe re-
" ports your poor mother diſregarded till
" we heard of your having been ſlighted
" by him, and he was going to marry
" another

" another young lady. This threw your
" poor mother into a ſad fit of melan-
" choly, which has not yet left her—but
" the thoughts of your ſoon coming to
" ſee us begins to cheer up her ſpirits.

" Oh, Fanny, Fanny! I never approved
" of theſe kind of unnatural couplings.
" Your letters ſhew you to be a girl of a
" good heart—and I ſhould not have ex-
" plained the particulars of our diſtreſs, if
" you could not feel for the unhappineſs
" which your abſence has occaſioned.

" Sir Simon has done every thing in his
" power to keep up our ſpirits—but Lady
" Hales, I find, ſince the diſcovery of
" Miſs Sophia's regard for Samuel, has
" taken a diſlike to Boxley — but now I
" underſtand there is to be great doings
" there.

" We have heard this from the houſe
" ſteward — and the rumour is, that Mr.
" Hales is to be married to a young lady

" of great beauty, title, and great fortune,
" who is to come down there.

" Your poor mother is broken-hearted
" at this news; nor can the goodneſs of
" the good Doctor's ſiſter, Mrs. Gordon,
" who intends making you her heir, recon-
" cile her to Mr. Hales's broken vow.
" Her heart is ready to burſt, for the
" ſteward has poſitively declared the truth
" of it. You know I never could believe
" that Mr. Hales, when he grew up to
" man's eſtate, would remember his old
" attachment.

" As for Samuel's fine profeſſion, God
" proſper it — Sir Simon and the Doctor
" may both have meant it well — but it
" can be no recompence to me for the loſs
" of my dear children — What does all
" this finery ſignify when they are taken
" from me — when I no longer behold
" them ſeated round my fire ſide? I want
" no grandeur and proud doings — I only
" want to ſee my children humble, happy,
" and in my arms. Your dear mother

" thinks

" thinks beyond this—ſhe has more of a
" worldly heart—but the tenderneſs of her
" nature makes amends for this deficiency.

" If then your heart is really as tender
" as your repeated letters ſeem to ſhew it,
" come then as expeditiouſly as you can
" to Oldthorpe, and do not ſacrifice the
" peace and happineſs of your parents for
" the fine things which the world has been
" tempting you with."

The parental love of Underwood could not be more manifeſted than the duty and filial tenderneſs of Frances. She now propoſed to Mr. Hales the expediency of immediately ſetting off for Oldthorpe with Samuel; and Mrs. Gordon, who equally partook of the amiable intentions of her adopted niece in France, and daughter in England, reſolved on accompanying them.

Their intentions having been communicated to Sir Simon Hales, who approved of their viſit, and from whence they were to be ſummoned, to accompliſh the plan which Sir Simon and Philpot had laid out.

In a few days Samuel and Frances were equipped for their journey to Oldthorpe. Fanny was to be dreſſed in an attire which partook of rural ſimplicity, and Samuel in an old uniform of a private in a marching regiment, to confirm the belief which Lady Hales had entertained, of his being enliſted as a ſoldier to ſerve in a regiment in America.

Thus adjuſted, the parties ſet off, while every meaſure was contriving in town by Sir Simon Hales and Philpot to ripen the plot which they had contrived to deceive Lady Hales and her aunt, Lady Dorothy.

PREPARATORIES TO SIR SIMON'S PLAN.

BY the negotiation of Sir Simon, Lord Shelldrake ſent dinner cards of invitation to the Haleſes, and alſo to Lady Dorothy Murray. The entertainment was to be ſplendid, and the moſt diſtinguiſhed perſons of faſhion were expected. This dinner party took place on the day before Samuel left town for Oldthorpe, who had been alſo invited as a young gentleman of Sir Simon's particular acquaintance, and who had conceived an attachment for Miſs Hales. Lady Hales and Lady Dorothy had noted his partiality for Sophia at the ball; and being reported the ſon of a gentleman of large eſtate, who reſided in Devonſhire, Lady Hales found no difficulty in admitting his viſits, which had for ſeveral

days been repeated after their meeting on Lady Champignion's night.

But at Lord Shelldrake's his perſon more attracted the attention of her Ladyſhip—he was equipped in his full-dreſſed uniform, and introduced by his Lordſhip—Under colour of his not being an acquaintance, every mark of cordiality was ſhewn to him on the ſide of her Ladyſhip, and Samuel, who might, perhaps, ſtand ſelf-accuſed for appearing, in ſome reſpects, as a deceptious character, yet carried off the part he had to perform with uncommon eaſe and confidence.

Lady Hales finding her favourite plan with the Jekylls, in every reſpect, fruſtrated, as well on the ſide of the young man, whoſe character was now branded with ridicule and the moſt abſurd of modern prodigality, as on the ſide of Lady Jekyll herſelf, who was on the eve of being married to a tobacco merchant—an old friend of Mr. Wardmote, who had conſented to leave off trade on the marriage being

being concluded. — Wardmote to forward the marriage of his ſon with Miſs Jekyll, had alſo entered into a compromiſe with Lady Jekyll to leave off buſineſs himſelf, commence gentleman, and entitle his ſon, if poſſible, by a ſplendid appearance, to that rank which he had been refuſed at Sir Simon Hales's, where Miſs Elizabeth Cornwall had expoſed him as an adventurer under the feigned name of Mr. Dalton.

Thus the ſentiments of Lady Hales, ſtill influenced by an uncommon ſhare of worldly vanity, and worldly propriety of family connections, ſeemed to turn her mind ſeriouſly towards a matrimonial alliance for her daughter; and this intention the aſſiduities of Samuel to Miſs Hales did not a little ſtrengthen.

The Count of Montauban had been averted from his deſperate plan of diſputing the rich prize of the Kentiſh maid with Mr. Hales; and after the ladies had retired from the table, a friendly glaſs had been

exchanged by him, Fitz-Morris, (one of the party,) and the latter, by the mediation of this conſiderate and polite nobleman.

Thus Sir Simon found hitherto his plan of deception with his wife and Lady Dorothy had ſucceeded to his moſt perfect wiſhes; but the *dénouement*, the diſcovery of the characters in the drama, now cauſed his principal concern. What would be the ſentiments of Lady Hales? How would the Scotch pride of Lady Dorothy reconcile this artful diſguiſe? What would be the meaſure of their reſentment?

Lady Hales had, 'tis true, lived in a continued ſtate of family diſſention with her huſband, as far as regard peculiar opinions of their children's happineſs; nor could her Ladyſhip be acquitted of uſing much deception in her conduct towards the alliance of her daughter with Mr. Jekyll. Plots and cabals were eternally fomented between her and Lady Dorothy againſt his inclinations; which, in other reſpects of

the

the marriage plans of his children, were always certain to be oppoſed with great virulency.

Parade and the levity of faſhion engaged much of the attention of Lady Hales, while Sir Simon, equally delighted with a conſiſtant portion of ſociety, was deſirous of ſpending a few months in town, to lay in a ſtock of ſummer converſation for his hoſpitable roof at Boxley — but this was exceeded by her Ladyſhip, who was never ſatisfied, unleſs glitter, extravagance, and a continual round of company, filled up moſt of her time.

Remonſtrances on the ſide of Sir Simon had no effect to reclaim her Ladyſhip, and to turn her mind into the calm ſtate of ſocial and domeſtic duties; and it ſeemed to be too late in life for him to uſe power and reſtraint, when unbounded tenderneſs and indulgence had marked his conduct from the firſt day of his marriage.

Had Sir Simon even ſelected from the

circle of their town acquaintance an admirer for his daughter, or a lady of equal rank for his ſon, as not being the election of her Ladyſhip, he knew well that his inclinations would have been oppoſed — Hence to endeavour to pleaſe, was ſure to draw upon him her oppoſition.

Tired, therefore, from a courſe of years, by a reſtive and ungovernable ſpirit, he was deſirous of gratifying his own peculiar ſentiments of matrimonial happineſs.

His marriage with Lady Hales had been negotiated by his father and Lady Dorothy to ſatisfy pecuniary convenience on one ſide, and a natural oſtentation on the ſide of his deceaſed parent. Lady Dorothy had promiſed her intereſt to procure his father an Iriſh Earldom—but death robbing him of the completion of his grandeur, it was only left him to enjoin his ſon to accept of Lady Dorothy's Scotch intereſt to raiſe him to this ſtate of nobility—but which Sir Simon always thought proper to relinguiſh,

relinquiſh, to the no little diſpleaſure of the aunt and niece.

His own marriage thus having been effected by intereſted motives, and not by the natural ties of the heart, he was determined to ſee that accompliſhed in his ſon which he himſelf had been refuſed.

To Lady Hales he had ever behaved with the tenderneſs of an indulging huſband, wilfully blind to her caprices and follies. He had, 'tis true, endeavoured repeatedly to wean her from her extravagancies; but his laudable views only ſerved to inflame her obſtinacy, and to lay the baſis of family contention.

His affection had thus by degrees degenerated into cold reſpect, nor was it till his ſon Edward and Sophia were riſing to maturity that he began to conſider of his comfortleſs and wretched alliance.

Determined, therefore, to be vigilant over the happineſs of his children, he cheriſhed

riſhed in them a natural affection in preference to a groveling intereſt, or a ſordid paſſion.

Well did he foreſee the development of his plot would cauſe a much greater conſternation than ever had tranſpired between him and his wife; but having long had but too powerful reaſons to arraign her follies, he was now finally reſolved, in his mind, that the diſproportioned marriage of his children ſhould prove a retaliation for her diſobedience and final expiation, ſhould ſhe hereafter return to her wedded duties.

LADY

LADY Dorothy Murray, ſo fully prepoſſeſſed in favour of Lady Cathneſs, had taken every opportunity of ingratiating herſelf in her good opinion.

Mrs. Gordon having married into the celebrated Scotch family of that name, was acquainted with the hiſtory of ſeveral perſons of diſtinction in that country, and had it therefore in her power to play into the foible of this lady with uncommon ſucceſs. Her unhappy huſband, Colonel Gordon, who had fallen a ſacrifice to the Steuart cauſe, reſided chiefly in that country, and where Mrs. Gordon had for ſeveral years been habituated to their cuſtoms, and had formed ſeveral connections.

This intimacy, which the advances of Lady Dorothy had, within the ſpace of three weeks or a month, matured almoſt to friendſhip, had drawn from her the moſt unreſerved intelligence of the Haleſes, into which family her niece had married; and Mrs. Gordon, availing herſelf of this freedom of communication, ſoon ſaw the

point

point which ſhe had to ſecure. Wherefore, having feigned to open her heart in confidence to Lady Dorothy, ſhe frankly declared that her viſit to London was merely to provide a ſuitable match for her daughter.

This confeſſion exciting the pride of her Ladyſhip, ſhe could not, as might naturally be ſuppoſed, be deficient in the ſcheme of propoſing her nephew, Mr. Hales, as a young man of great inheritance, as well from the ſide of his father, as from herſelf, at her death; and therefore commenced the family treaty of marriage—which, to her great ſatisfaction, ſhe ſoon found was approved by the aſſumed Lady Cathneſs.

Thus, with the conſent of Mrs. Gordon, the feigned mother of Frances, Lady Dorothy, highly elated with the ſucceſs of her negotiation, imparted the ſame to Lady Hales; and as Mr. Hales had ſignified his approbation, having informed them of his viſit to Lady Cathneſs, which

he

he coloured with the pretext of ſoliciting her daughter's hand, a propoſal of marriage was immediately ſignified to the parties.

A SHORT

A SHORT EPISODE OF THE CORNWALLS.

ON the arrival of George Cornwall in England he found his ſiſter by no means in ſuch a dangerous ſtate as he had been led to apprehend.

Baſe arts of an unfeeling and intereſted family to work on the paſſions and generous ſentiments of unexperienced youth! 'Tis true Amelia Cornwall had been diſordered—her extreme delicacy of health could not withſtand the complicated ſhocks of parental influence; which, united with the conſtant dialogue of human prudence on the ſide of her aunt, ſhe had been attacked with a ſlow nervous fever, and which the latter had contrived to anſwer as a ſpur to incite her nephew to revenge the

inſult which the Haleſes had ſhewn her family.

This lady, of a maſculine literary turn of mind, had received impreſſions of a nice ſenſe of honour from the peruſal of authors; and this, joined with the diſappointment in the ſucceſs of a marriage alliance in the family of the Haleſes, had given her ſentiments too free ſcope in the preſence of George Cornwall, who, having already taken fire on the declaration of Hales's ſentiment againſt the match with his ſiſter, when he ſuddenly left the houſe of the Baronet, was reſolved to call his old friend Edward to an account.

Heated with a ſpirit of romantic gallantry, young minds are too apt to ruſh precipitately into ſchemes of reſentment. But when the father and aunt had heard of his violence, and the narrow eſcape of Mr. Hales, their animoſity was inſtantly abated, and they then turned their thoughts to the forwarding of a prior offer which had been made to Amelia by a young gentleman of family

family and fortune, though not, in the latter reſpect, of comparative magnitude to Mr. Hales.

This young gentleman, of the name of Beauclerc, had reſumed his ſolicitation on hearing of Mr. Hales's defection; and being accepted into the favour of Mr. Cornwall, Amelia was prevailed on to receive the renewal of his addreſſes. Thus, as the hurry on the mind of this young lady became more calm, ſhe gradually recovered in proportion as the remonſtrance of the father and aunt had abated.

Mr. Beauclerc was the youth on whom ſhe had firſt placed her affections; but the antient friendſhip of her father with Sir Simon Hales having cauſed the repeated viſits of Mr. Hales in the family, intereſt and a ſhattered fortune had prevailed on him to enter into a horrid traffic with his beautiful daughter — and, to the ſucceſs of which, the natural firm and engaging manners of Mr. Hales did not a little ſerve to contribute.

But ſtrict juſtice here ſhould reſcue the independant Britiſh ſenator from an imputation of guilt. This tarniſh on his character was evidently cauſed by the artful interference of his ſiſter and cabinet counſellor, Miſs Elizabeth Cornwall, who, finding all her projects circumvented, and her brother not a little offended at the fatal conſequences which had very nearly reſulted from her plot, had ſet off for Italy to draw up the hiſtory of her tour for publication, having previouſly engaged with her bookſeller to accept of the work.

Plot, tattle, and the moſt conſummate hypocriſy, had rendered this lady completely odious among her acquaintance; and ſhe had thus deviſed a plan to force herſelf into celebrity, and to introduce herſelf afreſh into the world under the contemptible character of a *travel-monger*.

The retailer of fiction, under the maſk of veracity—the babler of anecdotes of thoſe perſons whoſe hoſpitality had received her at their tables—the reciter of marvellous adven-

adventures to decorate her pages with novelty, and the new furbiſher of old tales, turned into modern phraſeology — the traveller finding food for popularity on her return to her native country, and ſinking all the charms of real mental improvement into the oſtentation of ſelf importance and ſelf applauſe — magnifying the foibles of thoſe characters who came within the ſcope of her obſervation, to raiſe the value of her own abilities, and applauding thoſe from whom her own conſequence was derived.

On the departure of this lady, poeteſs, proſe writer, chronicle of all town news, and family tormentor, the Cornwall family had recovered their former peace of mind. Miſs Cornwall was ſatisfied with the honourable conduct of Mr. Hales—gradually recovering from her bad ſtate of health, and re-inſtated into her original partiality for Mr. Beauclerc.

Mr. Cornwall had reſumed his former friendſhip with Sir Simon Hales, while his

ſon

ſon George only waited for an opportunity to expiate his raſh and impetuous reſentment againſt his boſom friend.

THE

THE VISIT AT OLDTHORPE.

LADY Cathneſs had propoſed to Lady Hales and Lady Dorothy to wave their intended viſit to Boxley, but firſt to ſet off for Scotland previous to the marriage of her daughter.

Under cover of this journey Fanny had flattered herſelf with the tender hopes of pouring out her ſtreams of filial duty in the boſom of a doating mother — to remain at Oldthorpe till the nuptials were prepared. But herein the plot of Sir Simon ſeemed to gather in difficulty — Family writings and previous arrangements on the pretended dowry of Miſs Cathneſs evidenced the propriety of their departure for Scotland, and Lady Hales and Lady Dorothy were both elated on the forwardneſs

and

and energy with which the approaching nuptials were conducted.

This ſcheme ſeemed to promiſe a great ſhare of ſucceſs; but the arrival of Fanny at Oldthorpe could not fail of reaching the ears of Lady Hales, which might, perhaps, raiſe her ſuſpicion of the plot. It was alſo natural for her Ladyſhip to entertain ſuſpicions of Edward's having renewed his affection for her.

Should the grounds be diſcovered by her Ladyſhip, to remove theſe ſuſpicions, Sir Simon had recourſe to the ſpirited letter which Fanny Underwood had written to him, to emancipate herſelf from her obligations to his family, and from her pledge of affection to Edward. This would ſerve to prepare her for her return to her family —but to ſtill more effectually her ſuſpicions on Edward's fidelity to Fanny, he had artfully inſinuated that Edward had detected her in an affair of gallantry in Paris, and which was corroborated by Doctor Philpot, with aſſertions that his ſiſter had machi-

nated this intrigue on the premiſes of Edward's neglect, which ſeemed only to have been a ſtratagem to favour Mrs. Gordon's predilection in favour of a match of her own promoting.

To aſſertions ſo ſpecious Lady Hales had liſtened with great confidence; and as the moſt ſplendid preparations were making at Boxley, her Ladyſhip ſeemed to be abſorbed totally in this gratification of her heart.

She had now an opportunity of indulging her taſte, her pretenſions to elegance and expence — in this ſhe was not a little ſeconded by the pretended Lady Cathneſs, who had actually, in teſtimony of her hearty approbation of a magnificent nuptial feſtival, depoſited a thouſand pounds as a ſhare of her expence.

Under theſe arrangements Fanny and Mrs. Gordon ſet off for Oldthorpe.

Mrs. Gordon took an apartment at Maidſtone,

Maidſtone, where, at no great diſtance from Oldthorpe, ſhe could from time to time, by a private interview, diſcourſe with her lovely *éleve*.

Edward Hales, already inſpired with the moſt ardent affection for the lovely Frances, had reſolved on ſetting off for Boxley with his family, and where he had invited Samuel to perſevere in his addreſſes to his ſiſter.

This invitation had been accepted with the full approbation of Lady Hales, who had received the moſt favourable prepoſſeſſions of him, and which were not a little heightened by the contrivance of Philpot to engage the good report of Lord Shelldrake, to whom he had imparted the plan of Sir Simon, and on whom he could repoſe the moſt unſhaken confidence.

Lord Shelldrake had aſſerted his acquaintance with Samuel's family, and which ſeemed to be fully confirmed by the invi-

tation which he had given him to his table.

When Fanny and Mrs. Gordon arrived at Oldthorpe, it was in the evening — the chaiſe driving up to the farm houſe, old Underwood received them with the ſtrongeſt marks of parental affection—but her poor tender mother was not at the door to give her welcome. Whether exceſs of joy, or the continued inſults and upbraidings ſhe had received from her neighbours, or the diſſatisfied temper of her huſband, had conſpired to injure her health, Mrs. Underwood had been attacked on the overnight with a fever, the ſymptoms of which began to ſhew themſelves with conſiderable violence.

Sad welcome to the delicate heart of her filial daughter! She flew to her room—approached the bed of her ſick mother—Mrs. Underwood had been continually aſking for her — and hearing the noiſe of the chaiſe, her impatience could not be tranquiliſed—it was therefore judged, however

ever the great joy of meeting on the ſide of mother might, perhaps, affect her, the more prudent meaſure for the ſame to take place—She approached her bed—What ecſtaſy in the natural emotions of a parent and child, in thoſe ſituations of life which are not influenced by luxurious refinement, or theſe vicious pleaſures which never fail to render the heart calous and inacceſſible! —Tears of parental joy on one ſide—tears of filial love and duty on the other. Fanny's claſping her parent to her breaſt, and unloading her heart on her agoniſing boſom—in this ſituation Mrs. Gordon had ſtolen up gently into the room, with apprehenſions that the meeting would be too affecting for her health, unleſs ſhe could contrive to moderate her feelings.

Having, therefore, made uſe of every expedient by a gentle and perſuaſive train of argument, ſhe contrived to reſtore her to ſome calmneſs.

Fanny was now made acquainted with the miſery her mother had endured ſince her abſence — with the ſacrifice ſhe had made to cheriſh the natural deſire of ſeeing her happy—She heard the repeated attacks ſhe had received from her father, who, repenting of the conſent which he had given to her alliance with Mr. Hales, had heaped the moſt heart-rending accuſations on his wife—Moſt of his old friends had forſaken him — detraction had ruined his peace of mind — his once joyful cottage had been changed to a continual ſcene of diſcontent and bickering—the moſt dreadful conſequences were apprehended — Underwood was mournful and wretched; and with Samuel's plan of proſperity, he was equally diſſatisfied, and unwilling to ſee accompliſhed.

Mrs. Underwood could not conform to his harſh injunctions—ſhe had placed all her happineſs on ſeeing her daughter united to the man who had received his infant foſtering from the ſame breaſt; and in her ſtruggles with the ſtern diſcontent of her huſband,

husband, she had to support the most harsh reproofs which almost bowed her to the earth. He had rebuked her for intemperate ideas—of soaring to a station beyond her ability — and with great colour of reason had painted the situation of both his children as inimical to their as well as his own happiness — observing, that were their wishes to be completed, as far as might concern their union with Sir Simon Hales's family, or had dispersed the prejudice of birth and fortune, a circumstance not very probable, that they still might preserve their filial affection unimpaired by the splendour of their station, and that they could even descend to receive their parents to their bosom in the face of all this disparity — still the order of society must even withhold the teeming heart of the parent from assimilating with generous fervour in the participation of their proffered love.

Underwood had strength of mind to conceive, that a disparity of station must be attended with a disparity of sentiment; and that though his children might, on

principles of moral virtue, retain the greateſt poſſible ſenſe of filial duty, that duty could not be of a ſimilar nature to that which would ariſe from a more equal condition. The ſimple unadorned harmony of natural family attachment, the love of parent and child, muſt receive different impreſſions. The cottage fire ſide could impart no delight to the mind tutored with modern refinement — it might affect to receive pleaſure—might bear with it—but this impreſſion muſt ariſe from condeſcenſion—not the gratulating conviction of a full reliſh of ruſtic pleaſure which the leſs-cultivated mind could indulge in.

He had alſo aſſerted, that the natural pride of his heart reſtrained him from giving his full ſanction to the propoſal of Sir Simon—he could not endure to reflect on the ſuperior advantages of his children over himſelf — the natural authority and rule of the parent revolted at the unequal aſſortment. Perhaps there might be parents who would gladly reſign their natural

privi-

privileges to their children; but his own breaſt repelled ſuch reflections.

'Tis true, he ſaid, he had given his ſanction to the views of Sir Simon; but in this he had for ever taken leave of his future happineſs — The world too he had to combat with — the malignant voice of his neighbours — the falſe report propagated to invade his peace—envy of equals raiſed to the height of enmity and oblique reproach.

Excluded thus from his former friends, he had recourſe to his own roof, and there the moment of repentance, for having fallen into the unequal aſſortment of his children, added gall to his diſcontented ſoul, and the mild and tender companion of his breaſt received the bitter accuſation. —Thus with the diſcontent of her huſband the anxieties which ſhe experienced for the abſence of her children—the uncertainty of the plan ſucceeding — and the certain miſery attending the failure of it—heaped upon her a continual ſucceſſion of ſorrow—a

ſorrow which had internally preyed upon her ſpirits, and extended her on the bed of ſickneſs.

Thus Underwood, naturally of a ſtern and far-judging mind — a mind framed more for a cautious ſurvey of future miſery than for the enjoyment of actual preſent happineſs—had always conſidered the unequal connection of his children pregnant with great miſery; this, the reports of Mr. Hales's attachment to Miſs Cornwall, had not a little ſerved to increaſe.

Lady Hales alſo had, by an unwearied plan of ſedulous induſtry, propagated reports againſt his reputation; or, at leaſt, ſhe had always given her ſanction to every invective which circulated in the neighbourhood to the prejudice of the farm. Her unceaſing rancour and perſonally-marked hatred had been ſhewn on various occaſions.

Every circumſtance thus conſpired to render Underwood diſſatisfied with the fortune

tune of his children, and to perſuade him that the fulleſt completion of Sir Simon's plan, which Mrs. Gordon had opened to him concerning the approaching wedding at the manſion, could not balance the miſery he had experienced.

The ebullition of genuine affection between parent and child agitated the ſpirits of Mrs. Underwood, and the moſt alarming ſymptoms of her diſorder enſued. Mrs. Gordon was now obliged to uſe her authority; and to ſtill her mind, ſhe enforced the moſt perſuaſive argument to invite her to repoſe.

But what were the tranſports of grief that Fanny experienced! To ſee her mother reduced to an alarming ſtate of health by affliction—by anxiety on her account—to contemplate the ſcenes of unhappineſs which Oldthorpr had experienced ſince her

abſence—her heart condemned her as the cauſe of this miſery—her ſenſibility accuſed her of having indulged an aſpiring view of ambition at the expence of the more natural and delicious feels of filial duty. She had anticipated the utmoſt reach of her hopes with Mr. Hales — theſe hopes ſhe found could be ſoon diſappointed by the leaſt change of condition with her parents. At the thoughts of loſing her mother—a mother whoſe maternal tenderneſs had been ſo endearing—and were ſhe to riſe to that ſtate, which the innocent wiſh of the parent, in ſeeing her child proſperous, had ſo long flattered her, could not be balanced by the miſery of ſo great a loſs. To this dear object then were all her thoughts directed—to divine the ſource of her malady—to adminiſter comfort—to watch with unwearied tenderneſs over the bed of her ſick parent—engroſſed her reflections.

Her father was waiting to receive her below—ſhe flew to his arms. Mrs. Gordon remained with her mother. Her heart big ſwelling in her boſom, ſhe had no words to

utter. Underwood was altered in his countenance—the lines of care and grief were marked upon it—He caſt his eyes upon her with a riveting attention—he ſaw her dreſs ſimple—ſhe was attired in a plain linen gown—the powder combed out of her hair—a cloſe cap—in ſhort, ſhe had ſtudiouſly avoided the leaſt ſhow in her appearance to excite any reproving thoughts in her family. Her return was not the return of vain diſplay of ſuperior ſtation—it was the return of native goodneſs—native pure affection—to throw off the falſe glare of worldly poliſh—to repoſe on the boſom of her long abſent parents.

Underwood in raptures, and with aſtoniſhment, thus ſaw no artificial alteration in the appearance of his daughter—he drew his chair nearer to her ſide—took hold of her hand—preſſed it to his lips—bathed it with a tear. Still they were both ſilent. But what a ſilence!—a ſilence more expreſſive of cordial happineſs than all the painted expreſſions of feigned delight. The natural ſtrength of his mind cauſed him to diſcri-

diſcriminate the conduct of his lovely child. He had been informed by Mrs. Gordon of her appearance at the ball, and the proceſs of the Baronet's ſcheme—he had heard of that exquiſite poliſh ſhe had received—he muſt therefore have conſidered the appearance of Fanny as concerted through motives of prudence and good ſenſe—her judgement he admired—but the greateſt influence which her unadorned appearance had over him was, the bringing to his mind the completion of thoſe hopes which he had moderately, yet pleaſingly, indulged in. He ſaw before him the neat and rational picture of happineſs which his modeſt and contended mind had traced at an early period of his life—his child grown up—the handmaid of the farm—the ſimple companion of his cares, of his domeſtic happineſs—unaſpiring modeſty—unaſpiring ruſtic ſimplicity.

Herein was Underwood's delight, and departing from theſe thoughts, his happineſs decreaſed in proportion.

Thus

Thus influenced by the unaſſuming appearance and manner of the lovely Frances, the father thus addreſſed his child:

" Methinks, daughter, your home has " ſtill preſerved ſome ſhare of your regard. " You are glad to ſee your parents; but, " my dear, our hearts are rent in twain " with grief. I now ſee before me only " vexation and ſorrow in the plan we have " adopted. 'It is a ſad exchange, child, " to barter family peace for grandeur. I " do not know how Sir Simon will con- " clude the buſineſs. Lady Hales, as I " underſtand, is ſtill our enemy. And the " plot of the wedding, which Mrs. Gordon " has this inſtant informed me of, does not " meet with my approbation. Deception, " daughter, is what I never countenanced. " It is my proteſtation againſt it which has " been the cauſe of your mother's illneſs."

The word *proteſtation* averted the eyes of Fanny from thoſe of her father, and ſhe fixed them on the ground without a reply.

" Daughter,"

" Daughter," he reſumed, " you are " ſtricken with my laſt words: I have ſaid " I proteſt againſt the deception that is to " be made uſe of at the manſion. Lady " Hales's approbation can only recom- " pence me in part for the great trouble I " have experienced in this diſproportionate " match. To be the cauſe of unceaſing " enmity between Sir Simon and his lady " will never be reconciled to my mind. " We have all of us proceeded too far, " and I am afraid Sir Simon himſelf muſt " begin to think the ſame. The world, " my dear daughter, will reprove us—we " ſhall be ridiculed by the wife; and were " the Baronet thus to enforce his project, " the unſubdued pride of her ladyſhip will " make her reſent the inſult which ſhe may " conceive to be put upon her—and ſo, in " truth, it will be. She will be deceived " into the match. Were my own thoughts " to be told, I cannot help ſaying that I " feel a pride within me which withdraws " my conſent. 'Tis unworthy and diſ- " honeſt to promote our ſucceſs by this " kind of deception and artifice"——

Fanny

Fanny was ſtill ſilent.

" All my plans on the farm, my dear,
" have run back ſince you and Samuel
" have left us—nothing has proſpered. I
" feel my temper ſowered, and I fear your
" poor mother has been the ſufferer by it.
" Why has Sir Simon thus intruded on the
" peace of an innocent family?"

The tear ſtole down Underwood's face. Fanny roſe up to wipe it off with her ſoft and fair cheek. It was at the inſtant a tapping was heard at the door. A man entered in a ſoldier's dirty uniform—Underwood embraced his ſon Samuel. He was expected that evening.

The meeting was the emotion of perfect nature—yet of cultured goodneſs on the ſide of the ſon.

Samuel beheld the mournful aſpect of his father. He received the unwelcome news of his mother's illneſs—but he forbore to ſee her that night.

Mrs.

Mrs. Gordon had endeavoured to ſooth her into a more repoſed ſtate of mind; they were apprehenſive leſt any freſh emotion might occaſion a greater acceſs of fever.

TROUBLES INCREASE IN THE FARM-HOUSE.

THE morning following the arrival of Samuel and Frances, the diſorder of Mrs. Underwood increaſed with great violence. She was delirious. Fanny had ſat up with her the greateſt part of the night. Mrs. Gordon at a late hour ſet off for Maidſtone, and in the morning returned with an eminent phyſician of the town, who found her ſituation critical.

Underwood inconſolable, now conſidered the ſtate of his family arrived at an alarming

alarming period of earthly trouble. Though his mind had the ſtrongeſt portion of native vigour, he could derive no conſoling precept from that ſelf-taught philoſophy he had embibed. His religious ſentiments were not firm: he had made no ſacrifice to the calm principles of human conduct. The ſtate he was reduced to he contemplated as the reſult of his erroneous and unſtable diſpoſition — he became ſullen— ſlow to anſwer—loath to ſpeak.

In ruſtic life, for the want of that coalition of intercourſe which can alone ſtore the mind with a perfect knowledge of human nature, there is a doubtful caſt of temper always inimical to the happineſs of man. Departing from daily action, bodily labour, the mind of the peaſant becomes feeble and fluctating. It has no fixed principle for its conduct, and it inwardly droops under a ſtate of lethargic diſcontent. Underwood had placed, as we have already ſeen, his happineſs on the culture and improvement of his farm — all other extraneous thoughts were only inroads on his peace.

peace. He therefore now found himſelf approaching to the verge of miſery. His younger children were not of age to manage in the family; nor had he a ſon on whom he could confide any portion of his farming labours; and caſting his eyes on Samuel, he there beheld the great ſupport of his ſyſtem—the companion of his toil and rural proſperity.

The phyſician, on entering the room of Mrs. Underwood, beheld the beautiful Frances kneeling down by the ſide of her mother—encloſing her hands within hers, and bathing it with her tears. Her keen and pathetic ſenſibility had attracted his notice. The anxiety ſhe diſcovered, when ſhe watched over her mother at the time he felt her pulſe, gave him cauſe to apprehend her own health might be endangered. Her eyes with fatigue and ſorrow were languid, and indicated the ſtrongeſt marks of an approaching indiſpoſition.

Mrs. Gordon had inſtructed the phyſician in the hiſtory of Fanny and Samuel,

who,

who, by her prudence and intelligence, ſhe found had no acquaintance in the Hales's family, and therefore more eaſily to be worked over to her purpoſe.

He gave but little hopes of ſucceſs in the caſe of poor Mrs. Underwood—her diſorder, he ſaid, bore the ſtrongeſt ſymptoms of a putrid fever, ariſing, perhaps, from great uneaſineſs.

To Fanny he now directed a great portion of his attention, aſſuring her, that unleſs ſhe had reſolution to calm her own agitation, that, in all probability, her own conſtitution would ſink under it. But what conſolation could be offered Fanny? to reflect on the ſtate of her mother as the conſequence of her own conduct. The conflict, too, in her boſom, raiſed by her diſtracted father, had thrown her mind into the moſt diſordered ſtate. To be undutiful—to perſevere in her attachment to Mr. Hales in defiance of her father's approbation—what an agoniſing pang to a ſenſible heart! To arraign his conduct was an indelicacy

delicacy which ſhe could not ſuffer to intrude. At a period ſo intereſting to recede from the firm affection of her elevated admirer! Dreadful pang!

Age could not diſcern the cauſe of nature and truth through the faſcinating and magnifying lens of youth. True, the coldneſs of a parent's judgement might be diſproportionate to the gay rapture of a blooming child—but ſtill there was a tribunal of equity in her breaſt—that parent was miſerable—that miſery was originally of her own creating—not to perform ſome portion of filial ſacrifice, as an expiation harrowed up in her ſoul a ſentiment of the moſt divine complection. She found her ſoul towering beyond the frail delicacy of her ſex—ſhe was meditating a deed of heroiſm. There was an event riſing to a climax, on which was placed the ſad deciſive reſolution. Paſed on her mother, the mournful reflections of the unhappy Frances ſeemed to convulſe her frame with inſupportable agony.

Towards

Towards noon Underwood had a viſit paid him by farmer Drab.

There had been a long animoſity ſubſiſting between theſe neigbhours. The mind of Drab was, in every reſpect, contradictory to Underwood's.

The farmer, inflated with imaginary conſequence, had been led to laviſh moſt of his property on his family, to raiſe them to ſtations much beyond their original. To this Underwood at an early period had ſignified his diſapprobation when his neighbour had conſulted him. Drab had experienced the truth and ſagacity of Underwood's counſel. He had failed in moſt of his projects by adhering to the very oppoſite ſyſtem of his friend's advice—and this failure in ſucceſs had changed his former friendſhip to hatred. But Drab had now, as he thought, an opportunity of reverſing the tide of human affairs on the ſcore of Under-

Underwood's ſyſtem of training up his own children. He had now an opportunity of heaping condemnation on his neighbour.

It had been for a conſiderable length of time the general report of the neighbourhood, that his daughter, Frances, had been made the impure miſtreſs of Mr. Hales—and alſo the gallant friend of Fitz-Morris.

Charity always fails among the good folks in the country. They diſcern conviction in the moſt trifling complection of crimes, and always magnify ſuſpicion to reality. The violence of Fitz-Morris's ſcheme to ſeduce Fanny was ſoon publiſhed, and this of itſelf ſerved to ſtamp reproach on the Oldthorpe people. Drab hearing of Fanny's return, had no doubt but ſhe was forſaken by her admirers, and had ſought her houſe as an aſylum from a greater degree of ſhame and miſery—at once to gratify his reſentment, and to ſnarl at the oppreſſed ſituation of Underwood, he had called on him, under colour of buſi-

neſs,

neſs, to vent the venom of his rankling heart.

In the days of his expenſive family Drab had mortgaged ſome of his property to Underwood; and it was on the ſource of an impending ruin of the fortune of the former that the latter had hazarded his advice. The lamentable cataſtrophe of Drab's children had, at an advanced age, brought the father to ſome reflection, and he had improved the wreck of his fortune, to the advantage of paying off ſome of his mortgages—this then was the buſineſs he was come to tranſact.

The ſalutation from Drab was to the following effect:

" Neighbour Underwood, I am ſorry to " hear of your wife's illneſs. Umph— " Your daughter is returned, I am in- " formed — Umph — What, is Samuel ſtill " a ſoldier? — [*Samuel was ſeated by his* " *father in the ſhabby uniform of a private.*] " The lad does not look as if he had ſeen

" much ſervice. Tired of it, mahap, and
" come to be bought off. Where's
" Frances?—What is all indifferent there,
" eh, old friend?—Sad ups and downs. It
" is eaſier to talk than to perform. How
" does the farm go?—Umph—things are
" ſtrangely altered within theſe few years.
" What does'nt take ſo much pleaſure in
" the crops? Families change about ſur-
" priſingly—Who would have thought it,
" my old friend, that I ſhould be calling
" to pay off old debts? Deb and me
" have fought ſtoutly through it. It is not
" too late to learn. — Come, about the
" mortgage money. Hope to raiſe my
" head again, Maſter Underwood. Low
" ſpirited, my old friend!—Felt the ſame
" myſelf—great troubles to go through life.
" Children—aye, there's the kill-crow, now
" —no knowing—fathers do the beſt they
" can for them. All their own fault"——

UNDERWOOD, *ſternly*. " What is your
" buſineſs, Will?"

" Umph—eh—buſineſs!—come to pay
" off

" off the mortgage on the Oatland farm. " What dos't look a little crabbed? Odd " ſo, what dos't take offence at? Cas'nt " bear to be talk'd to about thy family? " Gravelled a little, mahap. Have ta'en " enough from thee, methinks. Might " bear a little enquiry after the girl and " boy—haſt aſked queſtions enow of all " ours. What haſt got by that?"

UNDERWOOD. " I can't talk of buſi- " neſs to-day—come to-morrow."

DRAB. " What croſſes you, Dick? " Told you all my croſſes. Po, po; never " mind a little diſgrace—heart's too proud " —mine, as bad a few years back—but " don't mind the clack of neighbours— " To be ſure they talk a great deal—about " what don't concern them—let them alone " —weather it out, Dick — I have got it " over, and now I laugh at it."

UNDERWOOD. " Samuel, ſhew Drab " the door."

DRAB. "Turn'd out of the houſe!—"come to that!—Can't bear to hear about "it—ſhall know my mind then—bad "neighbours long enough—won't live "longer in ſmoke—ſhall come to flame, "Dick—ſhall know my mind. When "haſt brought up a family thyſelf, prate "to others what does'n't concern thee. "My poor girls and boys had enough of "thy ſneering—do better thyſelf—look to "it, do ye ſee. None ſo bad, ſome worſe "—Would be the maſter of the pariſh, "Dick?—'twon't do—has't got nothing "by currying favour with the *barrownight*. "Lord, Lord! how many wiſe fools there "be in the world—don't talk of my chil-"dren"——

[*Drab making to the door, and Samuel following him.*]

"Don't talk of my children—look at "home."

Underwood now roſe with violent indignation.

DRAB.

DRAB. "Better to think of a dead "daughter than a living one with diſgrace "—look to that, old friend."

Drab with this expreſſion had approached the threſhold of the door—Samuel, as he was ſtepping over it, raiſed his foot, and, placing it againſt his poſteriors, kicked him fairly out of the houſe, and ſmacked to the door in his face.

Drab retired muttering a poſſy of invectives.

Underwood and Samuel retook their ſeats.

THE CONFLICT.

IT was towards the evening—the vernal ſun gleamed ſtreaks of carnation tints through the clouds of the horizon. The heart of Frances was bowed down with agony and deſpair. She had left the room of her unhappy mother. At an interval of returning ſenſe Mrs. Underwood beheld her daughter by her ſide—the ſtreaming tears of filial anguiſh melted the parent's ſoul—ſhe raiſed herſelf in bed, and claſping Fanny to her breaſt, with a deep-drawn ſigh, fell ſenſeleſs on her pillow. The ſcene impreſſed a horrid pang of ſtern grief on the heart of Frances. On the revival of her mother, Mrs. Gordon forced her from the room. Her preſence was death to either. She conjured her to walk into the air — calm repoſe was the only poſſible means

means of affording her relief. She retired. Fraught with overwhelming ſorrow, her ſteps were directed at random. Her reaſon overpowered with varied conflicts, ſhe took the path which led towards the ſteep aſcent of the hill which fronted the houſe, unknowing whither ſhe paced. She had gained the ſteep which carried her ſight over the rich vale, when ſhe found her ſtrength began to fail. She now recollected that ſhe had taken no food ſince the morning, and even then her ſlight repaſt was inſufficient to ſupport her delicate frame. She trembled — gazed for a ſpot to reſt her limbs—Roaming around, her eyes at laſt were fixed on the branching oak, under which ſhe ſat when Mr. Hales firſt diſcovered the emotions of his heart. It was at no great diſtance, and thither with inſupportable pain ſhe directed her ſteps.

Arrived at the root of the old hoary oak, ſhe flung herſelf on the ground. The dark chill evening approached. Fatigue and ſpiritleſs affliction deprived her ſoul of its natural powers. Exhauſted, and unable to

riſe from the ground, ſhe delivered herſelf up to deſpair. The mental agony which had aſſailed her, too powerful for her reaſon to ſupport, in ſilence ſhe invoked the merciful hand of Heaven to releaſe her ſoul from the agony which it endured. Reſigned to the will of her God, ſhe ventured not to arraign his inflicting hand, nor to challenge his providential interference. If in his mercy he thought proper to take her out of the world of miſery, ſhe could ſubmit to her fate. She wiſhed not for life—prepared to wait his all-ſuccouring, or all-ſubduing power, to the ſad depreſſed, all-humiliated condition of human nature, ſhe was patiently reſigned.

The reſolute and reſtleſs ſoul of her father had reduced her mother to the laſt ſtage of exiſtence. On either ſide, when ſhe ſurveyed her miſerable ſtate, what a ſtrong barrier to her happineſs was placed!

To fly to the arms of Mr. Hales, in defiance of her father's mandate, her filial duty would not ſuffer — to reject the man, whoſe

whoſe ſignal ſacrifices had conſecrated the integrity of a faithful heart, a deadly panic ſhivered her frame.

Again, if bridal happineſs was prepared to bring them together, the thoughts of an afflicted dying parent ſtaggered her ſenſes, and placed her happineſs at an immeaſurable diſtance. To obey the commands of her father, ſhe had the moſt difficult taſk of her ſex to undergo. She was to repel the perſevering attachment of the moſt honourable of men. Her heart had ſealed the vow.

Fatigue, ſorrow, deſpair, hovered over her—the evening cloſed—her ſpirits ſickened—ſhe reſigned herſelf to death—darkneſs ſoon dropped the curtain on the vale—A few ſtars were ſeen between the flitting clouds—the night dog barked—from her paternal roof ſhe beheld the light in her mother's room. She heard the cry of her brother for his loſt ſiſter. The name of Fanny re-echoed from the curvated cliffs—a ſilent groan, from the regions of her

broken heart, was only her anſwer to her anxious purſuers.

Some hours paſſed, and her ſickening ſoul was prepared to reſign itſelf — Midnight approached—ſhe had heard lamentations at no great diſtance. A voice from the reſt ſhe thought ſhe knew — but her ſenſes, which forſook her at intervals, on returning, made her believe it was the viſion of fancy only. She thought ſhe could diſtinguiſh that of Mr. Hales — it approached — re-animated life brought the ſound nearer to her ear — ſhe liſtened with ſuſpended reſpiration.

" Alas! 'twas here—'twas here I found
" thee, Fanny — 'twas here my heart firſt
" drew me toward thee—'twas here, dear
" maid, I felt the ſacred power of native
" love."

A deep-drawn ſigh — Mr. Hales drew back.

" Thou

" Thou God of infinite power—'tis ſhe
" —the ſpirit of my Fanny."

Mr. Hales, now frantic, threw himſelf proſtrate, and, with extended arms claſping the earth, exclaimed :

" Ah, it is ; it muſt be ſome divine in-
" terference—her departing ſpirit mourns
" —Angelic ſympathy confirmed my ap-
" prehenſions."

She had juſt ſtrength to pronounce his name in a ſoft whiſper—He raiſed his head —the evening ſtar darted its luſtre from between the rugged bare branches of the oak —he ſaw her veſtments.

He ſprang to her arms. He found his Fanny—he graſped her hand—'twas cold and lifeleſs.

" Speak, my angel—O heavens! her
" cheek is cold—ſhe dies, and all is
" finiſhed."

He called aloud for help—he raiſed her head on his lap—kiſſed her clay-cold lips—his heart now ceaſed to beat—his own ſoul trembled to depart—the ſhock was too powerful.

Like the bloſſom of the ſpring, the chilly blaſt of night was periſhing the hapleſs maid.

Now to his mind ruſhed the ſcene when his heart firſt experienced the pang of genuine love. Quick impreſſions of horror always precipitate themſelves on the mind of the devoted wretch.

'Twas the ſpot where the little Fanny had cheriſhed the poor young linnet which had fluttered from its neſt. Her tendereſt care could not preſerve its life—ſhe had anxiouſly hoped to reſtore it—it died on her breaſt.

Prophetic of the ſame fate, his apprehenſions had fixed the doom of his beloved fair one.

" Provi-

"Providence," he exclaimed, "has "thus denounced his vengeance." He had cheriſhed to an enthuſiaſtic veneration the natural ties of the heart, and to depart from them he thought was the direſt of human tranſgreſſions.

He pondered on his attachment to Miſs Cornwall, and his ſoul condemned him. But the conflict was too powerful — he could not bear the load of reflection.

His ſhouts were ſo long repeated that he deſpaired of aſſiſtance.

A convulſive ſpaſm had ſeiſed on the hapleſs maid. To die in his arms—horrid, horrid thought!

He drew from his pocket a brace of ſmall travelling piſtols—he diſcharged them in the air to alarm the neighbourhood.

Soon after he obſerved the approach of a light—he was chafing her hands and breaſt —he was trying to lift her up in his arms,

and

and endeavoured to carry her towards the houſe, when the light drew near. His ſhouts were now anſwered, and the voices of Underwood and Samuel he diſtinctly heard.

They were ſoon at the ſpot. When Underwood beheld his daughter without ſigns of life, and having heard the reports of piſtols, his agony was not to be expreſſed. Darting his eyes on Mr. Hales, who held his beloved girl extended in his arms, he flew on his throat, and graſping him with great violence, with a look of extreme horror, he exclaimed, with an inarticulate voice, "Villain, what deed haſt "thou committed! — thou ſhalt anſwer it, "moſt barbarous of men — my daughter "is killed!"

Samuel in the ſtruggle caught hold of Fanny, who ſhewed ſome ſigns of life. The force uſed to drag her from the tree cauſed a circulation of the blood.

Underwood was ſoon convinced of his miſtake.

miſtake. She was conveyed home. The Doctor had, by the requeſt of Mrs. Gordon, renewed his viſit in the evening to Mrs. Underwood; and arriving at the time of the alarm, was prevailed upon to remain in the houſe to wait the iſſue of the extraordinary diſappearance of Fanny.

But what an exceſs of conſolation! He pronounced her caſe to be the conſequence of great fatigue of body and mind, and gave the fulleſt aſſurance of her revival, if ſhe was inſtantly put into a warm bed. She ſoon recovered, and was able to receive ſome ſuſtenance.

Mr. Hales remained by her ſide with uplifted hands of thankfulneſs for the tranſition from miſery to ſuch exquiſite delight. Yet the tender heart of Fanny was inconſolable for the lamented ſtate of her mother. The phyſician paliated her caſe; though in truth he declared, that in two hours her diſorder would either take a favourable or unfavourable turn, and he therefore concluded to wait the night over.

Mr. Hales arriving in the evening at Oldthorpe, inſtantly on his entering the houſe heard the alarm that was ſpread of Fanny's diſappearing. All the grounds had been ſearched, and the alarm had riſen to the height of a conjecture that ſhe had plunged herſelf into a neighbouring mill dam; which was actually dragged by the ſervants of Underwood. And this idea was not a little ſtrengthened in the mind of Underwood by the moroſe oppoſition which he had made to a farther proſecution of her match with Mr. Hales. Grief for the dangerous ſtate her mother was in, and the check given to her attachment to Mr. Hales, might have produced a temporary fit of frenſy; and with this natural reflection, all the family were plunged into the greateſt conſternation.

"But who could paint the lover as he "ſtood!" The ſhock Mr. Hales received, almoſt deprived him of reaſon. He entertained the ſpreading ſuggeſtion—placed the probability of her deſtruction beyond a doubt—frantic he roamed on the ſteep of the

the mountain. 'Twas an innate ſympathy which had conducted him towards the ſpot where he received his firſt impreſſion of love. There he had reſolved to meditate on his wretched exiſtence. There is a power of Providence which far exceeds the feeble intellects of human beings.

In the room below were ſeated Underwood and Samuel. Mr. Hales was deſired to join them by the requeſt of Mrs. Gordon, to afford Fanny ſome reſpite from her great anxiety.

A long ſilence had taken place, which was broken by Underwood.

" Sir, I have uſed you unworthily—I " would beg your pardon, if you can for- " give ſuch a miſerable and diſtracted " wretch."

Mr. Hales, unattending to the words of Underwood, deſired Samuel to beg the company of the phyſician.

Under-

Underwood again intreated pardon of Mr. Hales for his unjuſt accuſation, and deſired him to aſcribe his conduct to the frenzy of an unhappy father.

Mr. Hales ſtill ſilent. The phyſician entered.

The former had arrived almoſt as ſoon as Fanny had diſappeared; and Underwood having entered into the theme of his diſſatisfacton at the meaſures adopted to bring about this match with his daughter, Mr. Hales now thought the interpoſition of the phyſician, and the dreadful event which had happened, of ſufficient efficacy to operate conviction in his mind.

Doctor Canteen, like moſt of the provincial profeſſors, had, at a former period of his life, been a ſurgeon in the army, well acquainted with men and manners; and, from the information he acquired from Mrs. Gordon, with ſome previous hints from Mr. Hales, was inſtructed in the real cauſe of the unhappy Mrs. Underwood's diſorder — the

perfect

perfect cure of his patient, on the turn of her fever, he now found must be derived from Underwood himself.

We often experienced that the rhetoric of our nearest friends, to bring us over to their views, will fail, when, on the other hand, we too often are swayed by the cursory insinuations of an alien—So this now seemed to be the case with Underwood.

On Dr. Canteen's entering the room, Underwood, with the doating fondness of a husband and parent, anxiously enquired after the health of his wife and daughter.

With medicinal gravity Canteen shook his head. The pangs of Underwood increased. "Tell me, Doctor," he emphatically exclaimed, "what hopes am I "to entertain?"

Dr. CANTEEN. "Look you, Mr. Un-"derwood, I answer not for the cure of "the body, when the mind is diseased. I "have no antidote for the mind, Sir.

"Your

" Your wife's diſorder is brought upon
" her by great affliction. There is ſome
" family diſagreement. I muſt be plain
" and bold to be of ſervice in your family.
" I may feel the pulſe of a patient, and
" pronounce her body to be in a high ſtate
" of fever — when the whole malady is
" ſeated here — [*placing his hand on his*
" *heart.*] But I do not wiſh to enter into
" family matters."

UNDERWOOD. " Speak out, Sir."

Dr. CANTEEN. " Why, then, to be free
" with you, I ſuſpect there is a family con-
" tention in the breaſt of your wife, and
" love in the heart of your daughter. Unleſs
" the former is mitigated, and the latter
" gratified, I am alarmed for the conſe-
" quences."

UNDERWOOD. " What is to be done,
" Sir?"

Dr. CANTEEN. " Give up the point.
" You have almoſt brought your family to
" the

" the jaws of death by the pride of your " heart. To avoid one bad conſequence, " you fall into the oppoſite error. As a " ſtranger, perhaps I can tell you ſome " truths which you little ſuſpect. It is re- " ported in our town that your daughter is " the miſtreſs of Mr. Hales, who, I am " informed, is deſirous of honouring your " family, by proving to the world the fal- " ſity of this report."

UNDERWOOD, *with ſurpriſe.* " True; " if he marries my daughter, the ſlander " of my enemies is, in this inſtance, de- " feated."

Dr. CANTEEN. " Did you never think " of this before?"

UNDERWOOD. " I am aſhamed to ſay " it is the firſt time."

Dr. CANTEEN. " It was the duty of my " profeſſion to enquire if the mind of my " patients had been diſtreſſed. Mrs. Gor- " don and Mr. Hales have informed me,

" that

" that you have circumvented a plan, on
" which the entire happineſs of your wife
" and daughter had been placed. You
" have meditated a ſcheme of happineſs
" yourſelf—and ſee how you are defeated
" in the execution—you riſque the loſs of
" two of your principal bleſſings to obtain
" the point of your wiſhes: and were this
" not to be the caſe, you purchaſe oppro-
" brium at the expence of an imaginary
" virtue. If your pride does not lead
" you to an alliance with the firſt family in
" the county, your pride ſhould ſhield you
" from imputed obloquy. Your daughter
" muſt marry Mr. Hales—you muſt ſooth
" and conform to the wiſhes of your wife,
" if in his providential interference the
" Almighty ſhould think fit to reſtore her
" to health.

" And now, Mr. Underwood, as phyſi-
" cian of the mind, as well as the body,
" alſo give me leave to preſcribe for *your*
" malady.

" Like the *long-headed* fools of your
" gro-

" groveling, though very laudable and
" uſeful, profeſſion, you have been laying
" down plans of impracticable happineſs,
" abſtracted from the contingencies of life;
" you have been dreaming of your own
" eaſe and comfort at the expence of your
" wife and children; and ſurveying the
" paltry empire of your own thatch, you
" have only lived to gratify your own miſe-
" rable conceptions. You ſhould have
" waked from the ſervility of theſe ſelfiſh
" views, and have conſidered your own
" happineſs as intimately allied to thoſe
" around you.

" This temper only ſuits with the ſavage
" tribes in the undiſcovered regions of the
" earth, not with the inhabitants of this
" iſland, whoſe liberty of ſoul is their
" birth right. Shame, ſhame!—I will en-
" deavour to exert my ſkill to reſtore to
" your breaſt the angelic martyrs to your
" tyranny; and then, Sir—[*Doctor Canteen,*
" *with honeſt indignation, riſing from his*
" *ſeat*]—and then, Sir, I will truſt to your
" generoſity for that future retribution

" which

"which you have in your power to be-
"ſtow."

Poor Underwood, terribly convinced of the apparent fatal truths which Doctor Canteen, in the fullneſs of his heart, had uttered, trembled and changed countenance. Mr. Hales approached him—took him by the hand. Samuel embracing him —claſped him to his breaſt.

It was a ſilent ſcene of pathetic conviction.

Doctor Canteen left the room—He ſaw the effect of a ſeaſonable interference.

The obdurate heart of Underwood, teeming with a tender impulſe which the ſtern officers of life had ſo long kept in thraldom, now melted into an unuſual tenderneſs. The ready forgiveneſs of Mr. Hales did not, perhaps, a little contribute to produce the effect. There was a reparation to be made this gentleman—and what other

other reparation than the one which his heart now dictated?

Underwood wept bitterly.

"Henceforth, Mr. Hales, I ſubmit—"I yield up my will to yours. Let us "propoſe every means in our power to re-"ſtore peace to my wretched family. I "fear I have been to blame—Suſan has "felt my power too ſeverely."

With ſimilar ſentences of contrition and acquieſcence to Mr. Hales's plan, he declared with an emphatic fervour, that he would in future be under his abſolute control in the propoſed alliance.

PREPARATORY EVENTS TO THE SCENE AT THE FAMILY MANSION.

MR. Hales had rode from town. His truſty ſervant, Peter, had taken his horſe to the manſion, under pretence of giving preparatory orders for his approaching wedding with Miſs Cathneſs, while he himſelf had taken the road to Oldthorpe.

Secreſy on all ſides was enjoined with the greateſt poſſible energy, and the attendants in the farm bribed, to no ſmall amount, for the better carrying on of the plot.

The town houſe had received orders for breaking up. Sir Simon and Lady Hales were expected on the third ſucceeding day. Workmen were ordered to ſet off from town to make the neceſſary preparations for the enſuing feſtival; and by the device of

of the Baronet, who had cauſed the approaching marriage of his ſon with Miſs Cathneſs to be publiſhed in the papers, there was no doubt but in a few days the news would be current through the county.

The feſtival was to be conducted with the moſt liberal ſplendor. It was a whim of the Baronet to renew the old cuſtoms of his forefathers on the occaſion.

But under theſe approaching moments of mirth and feſtivity Mr. Hales found all his happineſs placed on a ſlender reed, which the ſlighteſt blaſt of fortune could ſoon periſh.

He had waited with all the brooding miſery of a condemned criminal to hear ſome good account of Fanny's health. Mr. Hales had fallen aſleep in the chimney corner, by the ſide of Underwood and his ſon Samuel, whoſe hearts were alſo influenced at intervals with a ſucceſſion of hope and deſpondency.

About ſeven in the morning Dr. Canteen, with Mrs. Gordon, made their appearance. The Doctor's cheerful caſt of countenance gave aſſurance, that a favourable criſis had taken place with his patients. Mrs. Underwood's diſorder had yielded to the efficacy of his medicine. She had fallen into calm and uninterrupted ſleep. Fanny was in the ſame ſtate, and, to their unſpeakable happineſs, he pronounced them both out of danger.

Mrs. Gordon and Dr. Canteen departed for Maidſtone with intention of returning in the courſe of the day.

When Mrs. Underwood waked, the phyſician had left orders, that her huſband ſhould be the firſt perſon who ſhould wait upon her. He was then compoſed by degrees to calm her mind on the ſubject of Mr. Hales's attachment to her daughter; and this circumſtance now took place with the moſt happy conſequences. Underwood entered her room with great ſtilneſs,

and

and was by her ſide when ſhe awoke. The moſt ſoothing affection being mutually exchanged, he failed not to open to her his change of ſentiments reſpecting Fanny and Mr. Hales. In a few hours Underwood, who, by an over-rated firmneſs in imaginary virtue, had thus ſo nearly riſqued the perdition of all his worldly happineſs, found his wife and daughter providentially reſtored to him.

At this moment of unexpected, unlooked for tranſition from miſery to great comfort, his joy ſeemed to have no bounds.

Mr. Hales inſiſted on being the meſſenger of peace and tranſport to his lovely Fanny. A ſervant maid announced the glad tidings of her waking to a recovered ſtate of health. She was informed of her mother's amendment—that Mr. Hales was in the houſe waiting to impart news that would ſtill afford an addition of delight.

The moment of tranſport was at hand. He entered her room; ſeated by her ſide,

he informed her of the change of ſentiments which had taken place in the mind of her father.

When a contraſt of events, in their nature ſo piteous, ſo intereſting, teeming with ſuch unbounded calamity, diſplay themſelves in the hiſtory of human life, the young, the aged ſhould receive inſtruction, and ſtruggle with the ſurrounding ſtorm. Deſpair ſhould be repelled from the agoniſing breaſt, and calm reſignation wait the final completion of mortal deſtiny.

In a few days Mrs. Underwood was reſtored to perfect health. Fanny recovered her bloom and vivacity. The farm houſe received a different aſpect.

Underwood looked forward for the completion of the plan, to which he had now concentered his hopes and future gratification. Cheerfulneſs and content again reviſited his family. Leſs ſordid, leſs ſelfiſh in his own perſonal happineſs, he baniſhed from his mind all other thoughts than thoſe which

which reſulted from the approaching feſtival of Boxley-grove houſe.

Reports were now ſpread to injure his peace. Analiſing the actions of their neighbours, the provincial inhabitants are wonderfully induſtrious to fabricate ſtories of detraction, built on the ſlender premiſes of ſurmiſe. Always inclining to the rigorous ſide, they increaſe their malignity at the expence of all the gentler qualities.

Mrs. Gordon was now conſidered as the procureſs of the innocent Kentiſh maid.

The anecdote of Dr. Philpot having gone abroad when he diſcovered and liberated Fanny from the houſe of Mrs. Bracegirdle, the above lady was metamorphoſed into the latter; and this circumſtance having reached the ears of Lady Hales, ſhe had not failed to inſinuate the ſame to Sir Simon.

Leſt, however, this circumſtance might be publiſhed to the detriment of the plot,

Sir Simon immediately, on this information, counſelled Mrs. Gordon and Fanny to make the beſt of their way to town, where they were to live in private, till the time drew nigh of their pretended arrival from Scotland.

Lady Jekyll had received an invitation with her daughter, now Mrs. Wardmote; but the combuſtion in that family had incited a laſting warfare between her and Lady Hales; and as the pride of the latter had taken alarm on that connection, ſhe felt herſelf happy in thus being releaſed from her company.

Young Jekyll having unfortunately, on one night's venture, been *diſhed up* at a gaming table, and arreſted ſhortly after by the tradeſmen of his extravagant miſtreſs, was immured in the King's Bench. He thus being out of the queſtion, the

Boxley

Boxley family had not much to apprehend from his divulging the plot.

Lady Champignion, Lord Sheldrake, and the gay Fitz-Morris, were alſo to be of the party, with a circle of town acquaintance, to add ſplendor and hilarity to the magnificent ſcheme which the Baronet had propoſed, and which ſo heartily concurred with the profuſe ſpirit of Lady Hales, and the Scotch pride of Lady Dorothy Murray.

THE FAMILY ARRIVE AT BOXLEY-GROVE HOUSE.

LADY Hales and Lady Dorothy Murray were arrived at the manſion. A letter had been contrived by Mrs. Gordon to reach one of her north-country relations on the ſide of her late huſband, Colonel Gordon; which being received with a North-Britiſh poſt mark, announced her intentions of ſetting off in a ſhort time, to the perfect ſatisfaction of Lady Hales, as well as to the vaſt, unſpeakable delight of Lady Dorothy.

In the mean time Lady Hales, by particular favour of Sir Simon, had the whole preparations of the feſtival entruſted to her ſuperintendance. Thus having a moſt ſignaliſed opportunity of indulging her natural vein for architectural embelliſhment, with

with the whole train of whimſical decoration and *elegant* metamorphoſis, her exuberant fancy was now employed to its fulleſt extent.

A colony of workmen were introduced to the houſe, and as many to the grounds and gardens. Abſtracted from the antient refectory, which the Baronet inſiſted on being appropriated to the feſtival itſelf, and renewed in common with the old kitchen, as ſacred to the manes of his departed anceſtors, once famous for their hoſpitality and public ſpirit, the reſt of the houſe was at her entire diſpoſal.

Firſt ſhe began with the drawing room above ſtairs — away went the partitions of the adjacent apartments to furniſh full ſpace for a long ball room. Triumphant arches, with flouret feſtoons, were raiſed at certain diſtances — columns of painted jaſper — flouriſhes and chequered decorations crouded one upon the other, to the occupying of as much ſpace as the additional rooms ſupplied.

In the grounds there were to be arcades, waterfalls of tin and machinery, tranſparencies, and a jumble of all the art of gardening deſcribed in the Arabian nights. The bowers, walks, and receſſes, were to be illuminated with party-coloured lamps. Fire-works were the only additional luminaries by the deſire of Sir Simon. But to confirm her Ladyſhip in the opinion of the true lover of *nouveauté* and happy expedient, was her uncommon genius in diſplaying a ſheet of water on dry ground—water unfortunately being the grand defect, according to her Ladyſhip's opinion, in the grounds of Sir Simon. Repeated overtures ſhe had made to excavate a ſerpentine lake through one of the verdant rich lawns on the back of the houſe—but to this propoſition Sir Simon had been always averſe. Her Ladyſhip now, to ſhow her taſte, had actually contrived to have laid down an enormous extent of azure-painted canvaſs, in imitation of water; and on which were to be elevated ſeveral veſſels with ſails, to be wheeled about, and to

ſalute the company with repeated broad-ſides.

To render the ſcene truely Arcadian, her Ladyſhip had enrolled the village nymphs and ſwains, who were to be habited in dreſſes which ſhe had prepared, and who were to dance on the green, with tabor and pipe. In the evening they were to be admitted into the pleaſure ground, and permitted to philander among the company in the gardens.

While theſe arrangements of uncommon taſte were deviſing by her Ladyſhip, Sir Simon was employed in giving orders for an ox to be roaſted at the large kitchen range of his anceſtors, and a capacious ſupply of all kinds of hoſpitable cheer.

Sports of various kinds were to be given. Cudgel playing to ſupport the criterion of true Britiſh valour. The plowman's ſkull being thick, there could be no danger of beating out his brains—and few brains being in his head, the leſs fear of any other

conſe-

conſequence than mirth and a bloody pate —a pair of buck-ſkin breeches the prize for the champion who firſt drew blood.

The young laſſes of the village were to hop for a new holland ſhift, and the unſucceſsful afterwards to role down Sir Simon's ſlope, from his temple of Venus, to ſhew that their own Iriſh linen was as white as the one which the fortunate victor diſplayed.

Lady Dorothy begged leave to introduce ſome of her AULD *kaunections*.

The invitations in the county were equal to the general ſplendor of the feſtival, which the Baronet had propoſed to be of three days duration, and the anniverſary to be held for as many ſucceeding years.

LADY

LADY AND MISS CATHNESS ARRIVE AT THE MANSION.

AT the expiration of the appointed time, a meſſenger, as out-rider, in ſcarlet and gold, preceded Lady Cathneſs to Boxley to inform the Baronet that ſhe and her daughter were upon the road.

They arrived in a moſt ſuperb travelling equipage — three ſervants, well mounted with rich liveries and holſtery, and two maid ſervants in the carriage.

Whatever elegance and ſplendor could unite to adorn the ladies were diſylayed in their travelling undreſſes.

Their arrival was about noon the day before the nuptials.

The

The reſpect which Lady Hales and Lady Dorothy ſhewed them was unprecedented in the annals of ſuperlative good breeding. The pariſh church bells were inſtantly ſet a ringing in the ſtudied changes of the country profeſſors of that art. Sir Simon's pateraras fired, and thus the adjacent country ſoon informed of the auſpicious event.

Shortly after the out-rider of Samuel arrived in blue and ſilver, and his equipage ſoon followed. He was in company with his friend, Lord Shelldrake.

The parties prepared themſelves to ſit down to dinner. All eyes were peering and anxious to behold the beautiful Miſs Cathneſs.

The lovely heroine entered the dining parlour, handed by Mr. Hales—her dreſs, ſilver-ſpotted crape—her hair, in negligent ringlets floating on her ſhoulders—Lady Cathneſs decorated with great diſplay of magnificence, and who accepted of the precedence which the reſpectful aſſiduity

of

of Lady Hales and Lady Dorothy overwhelmed them with.

Miſs Hales was attired in all the embelliſhment which equiſite faſhion could produce. Lady Hales had laviſhed the greateſt profuſion of rich ornaments on her perſon to excel, if poſſible, the magnificence which Miſs Cathneſs was expected to appear in. Jewels of conſiderable value were heaped on this young lady to rival the *eclat* of Lady Cathneſs, which her brilliant appearance ſeemed to announce. She was handed in by Samuel Underwood, who, by the particular requeſt of Sir Simon Hales, was dreſſed in his uniform; the Baronet jocoſely obſerving, that though it was not faſhionable for an officer to wear his regimentals in any other place than on the parade, or with his regiment, yet conſidering him as at head quarters, and on actual ſervice, he could by no means diſpenſe with his enſignia of military courage.

The party which ſat at dinner were numerous,

merous, and the moſt convivial moments paſſed during the repaſt.

When the ladies retired, the gentlemen prepared to take their copious libations; but Lady Hales, ever attentive to decorum and the temperate ſtate of Sir Simon, who, when unſubdued by the magic of Bacchus, was always more eaſily ruled by his wife, very ſoon ſent the ſervant into the room to invite the gentlemen to coffee and tea.

The ſervant was diſmiſſed, and with orders to ſupply the table with a dozen of Burgundy; but a freſh meſſage from her Ladyſhip ſtated the preparations for muſic, and that Miſs Cathneſs had been prevailed upon to touch the cords of Miſs Hales's harp, her favourite inſtrument.

The gallantry of the gentlemen could not reſiſt the influence of a deity, whoſe mild and ſoothing power could impart to the votaries of Bacchus a charm of ſuch

mild

mild efficacy to mingle delight with his boiſterous orgies.

When the gentlemen entered the drawing room, the folding doors flung open diſplayed the exquiſite form of Miſs Cathneſs ſeated with the harp of Miſs Hales.

She ſung—her notes like the ſtrains of the figurative angel of the cloud, touching the hallowed ſtring of ſymphony to the great over-ruling power of nature, commanded the moſt ſtill and fixed attention.

ODE

ODE TO NATURE AND TO TRUTH.

I.

Nature—Goddeſs! heav'nly born,
O'er grove, o'er fountain,
Thou preſidſt—pure as the breath
Of perfum'd zephyr o'er the heath—
Swift thy parent ſkies remounting—
Of thy blooming honours ſhorn,
Alas! thy empire ſinks in death.

II.

Yet ſtay—'tis TRUTH, thy ſiſter's voice—
Yet ſtay—thy fecund breaſts ſoft tranſports yield;
Enrapt, the tow'ring ſoul
The fiend of falſehood may control—
May ſeek thy drear and loneſome realm—
In thy fair preſence may rejoice,
From harpy hate thy pure and ſoft breaſt ſhield,
And all thy foes with gilded triumph overwhelm.

O god-

III.

O goddeſs, heavenly born! nor pomp, nor
ſway—
No luſtre beams without thy charm—
The ermin'd monarch, ſlave to form,
In plaints oppreſſive, flies the day.
His heart thy ſacred flame ne'er deigns to
warm,
And turns light zephyr to life's ruffling
ſtorm.

IV.

But feſtive pleaſure with light tread,
By TRUTH and NATURE gaily led,
With flouret wreaths are crown'd—
Hark the pipe!—
The nymphs advance—
Love is ripe—
Thro' the meads they merry, merry dance,
And in THEIR CHORAL train tranſporting
bliſs is found.

When

When Fanny had finiſhed the ode, a low murmur of applauſe was heard in every part of the room. Excepting a young nobleman, of much ſplendor and great faſhion, ſhe received neither claps, nor the ſtimulating ſounds of *bravo* or *braviſſimo*. Faſhion had inſpired him with indifference. He had, on the introduction to the drawing room, entered into converſation with a youth of ſimilar appearance, and their converſation *ecarté* had laſted during the beautiful execution of Fanny on her inſtrument. Lord Belpoint had now ſuddenly turned his head, clapped, and ſhouted in great raptures—talked of opera ſingers, and extolled her execution as ſuperior to any he had ever heard.

But thoſe who had truly felt the force of her execution moved up to her chair, and, from almoſt every perſon in the room, ſhe received the moſt gratulating expreſſions of the pleaſure which ſhe had imparted.

The ode was Philpot's—it conveyed all the

the energy which her peculiar ſituation demanded.

Mr. Hales dropped a ſilent tear of ecſtaſy in beholding the general homage paid to the idol of his heart; and the Baronet, no leſs affected with delight, divulged in his look his inward ſatisfaction in contemplating the proſperous effects which his ſteady plan had hitherto produced.

Lady Hales, in company with Lady Dorothy and her Scotch *kaunections*, alſo expreſſed their raptures which the ſkill of Fanny had excited.

With her own hand Lady Dorothy preſented her with a cup of coffee—but on the ſide of the fair St. Cecilia, her manner of receiving the general applauſe, ſtill heightened the admiration of the company. Their plaudits ſhe heard with a mild ſettled arrangement of features. Perhaps the fears of an unfavourable iſſue to the high caſt of character ſhe had aſſumed, turned her ſoul inward, and checked every riſing emotion of

of ſelf love. More native, more truely noble, did the female ſex never appear under the uncommon congratulations which her extraordinary merit had incited. The flattering praiſes of the men, the ſmiling attention of the women, only produced in her a calm and eaſy return for their civility. It was that gentle collected haviour which would admit of ſtricture from the pervading mind of philoſophy.

Stern contemplation would have conſtrued the demeanor of the Kentiſh maid into a more than human intellectual viſion of the ſoul, ſoaring beyond the degrading partiality for its own imbecility. It could behold in the ſettled eye—graceful eaſe of this young woman a ſenſe of human equity, allowing itſelf no farther ſuperiority of merit than what could be derived from the more high-favoured occurrences of life. It could anticipate the noble equaliſation of the mind; drawing forth from oblivion the latent powers of excellence, and adorning the unſkilful pupil with the ſame energy of imparting delight. Nature in this moſt

wonder-

wonderful, and to the extreme bountiful in correcting the narrow impulſe of a predominant ſelf love. What ſouls are there not which are capable of expelling this riſing fiend which degrades us!—which tinges our brighteſt actions with diſguſt and abhorrence! — Souls which can humble themſelves in proſperity, and refuſe to tower when they are uplifted on their wing! Souls ſo tempered, that their own ſenſe of pleaſure can only ariſe from the moderation of ſelf approbation. Thus the exterior frame will receive the impulſe of a bright divinity, and the ſurrounding admirers catch the ſympathetic feel of an irradiated truth. All ſenſibility will then be huſh. No exterior inelegant ſign to convey the ſenſe of perceptious pleaſure. Internal rapture is the peerleſs reward.

The muſic was ſcarce concluded when Lady Hales had contrived to enroll a band of village maidens with their partners, to aſſemble on the lawn in paſtoral dreſſes, with which ſhe had furniſhed them, to

amuſe the company with a dance to the tabor and pipe.

Several of the company roſe to join in the dance — and thus the evening paſſed with cheerfulneſs and general good humour; but to mingle with an alloy of perplexity, this enraptured plan of Lady Hales, of contriving a marriage feſtival with ſo much abundant elegance and ſplendor; the houſe ſteward arrived with intelligence, which greatly interrupted the promiſed pleaſure of her ladyſhip. Her invitations had exceeded the accommodation of her company; and on the enlargement of the grand ſaloon, having taken in a range of bed chambers, it was now found that this alteration had precluded the neceſſary proviſions for diſpoſing of her friends for the night. However, that ſome expedient might be deviſed, a general counſel was called; the ſupernumerary gentlemen were to draw lots for the chambers, and the unſucceſsful to put up with a ſleeping preparation in a part of the grand ſaloon, which

was to be partitioned off with hangings for the purpoſe.

The decorations of the ſaloon were magnificent to the extreme of expence and invention — a vaſt length of table, ornamented with *epergnes*, glaſs ſalvers, piramids of luſtres, with pendant-cut receivers for delicate viands and preſerved fruits — wax figures of animals, birds, fiſh; the whole range of creation, ſelected for ſubjects, to be introduced at certain intervals on the table, that the ſight might receive an equal gratification with the taſte. Many days had been beſtowed, and ſome of the principal confectioners in London employed to execute the grand ornaments of the table; which were exhibited the night before, to effect the order of the feſtival with more accuracy. This ſumptuous preparation was intended for the deſert, and to be introduced when the cloth was removed.

At both ends of the ſaloon were great ſpaces left for the attendants of ſervants at

the ſide boards, and it was here the ſmall apartments were ſubdivided with hangings for the reception of the ſupernumeraries.

THE CHATEAU ALARMED.

THE company had retired to reſt between one and two in the morning. Lord Belpoint and ſeveral of his young friends had ſacrificed too bountifully to the orgies of Bacchus—and as in full jollity, when the mad-cap head of youth teems with folly and the ſpirit of diſorder, confuſion and imprudence are its confederates, ſo this frolickſome young nobleman was intent on miſchief. But to give his miſchief an exalted *eclat*, no leſs than utter confuſion did his wild inebriety ſuggeſt.

Having

Having on his entry into the ſaloon, in his road to bed, perceived the variegated lamps filled with ſpirits of wine ready prepared for illumination, he conceived the grand project of conſecrating his name to poſterity as the greateſt buck that had flouriſhed in modern times.

Seconded by two more of his daſhing heroes, he declared that he had hit on a prodigious excellent device to produce one of the fineſt *rous* that ever was invented—it was no leſs a contrivance than that of lighting up the lamps, and ſhouting fire at all the room doors.

By this moſt excellent project, which would be very innocent, and no perſon could be the ſufferer, the charming young brides would be thus obliged to ſcamper out of their bed chambers in all the pure ſemblance of divinities, and all the old tabbies rending the air with horrid yells, to the vaſt, the ſupreme delight of the beholders.

No ſooner deviſed than the counſel of war ratified the decree, and the lamps were inſtantly lighted up.

Fire! fire! now reſounded on all quarters, and the ſleeping gueſts behind the thin hangings awakened from their ſleep, beheld the amazing glare in the ſaloon. But our heroes having unfortunately, in lighting up the lamps, dropped a conſiderable quantity of ſpirits of wine on the feſtoons of artificial flowers which hung pendant on the columns of the arches, which taking fire, they blazed upward from the column to the cieling with an alarming effect.

Sir Archy M'Snivleſnuff, Lady Dorothy's friend, who ſlept at the end of the ſaloon, flew immediately to the bed-room, *ſpeculum*, and ejecting the ſame with hopes of extinguiſhing the flames, had the misfortune, by too great precipitation, to ſend the receiver after it; which taking an oblique direction, unhappily alighted, with a diſaſterous cruſh, on a moſt ſumptuous Chineſe temple and luſtre of cut glaſs, with profuſion of pendant ornaments. The

noiſe

noiſe brought into the room ſeveral other gueſts, who, finding it actually in a blaze, alarmed the houſe with redoubled cries.

Regardleſs of the decoration of the table, and following the example of Sir Archy, they emptied their bottles and other water engines on the flames, which were in a ſhort time effectually extinguiſhed.

By this time the manſion was in a general alarm. A garden engine had been planted before the windows, and a deluge of water ſent into the ſaloon—and it was with conſiderable difficulty the ſervants could be perſuaded that the apparent conflagration was no other than the brilliant effect of the lamps and luſtres.

The havock which this unfortunate ſally of youthful enterprize had occaſioned is better conceived than expreſſed. Mr. Crocan, the confectioner, having ran into the ſaloon, and beholding the chaotic confuſion and entire deſtruction of the principal ornaments of his deſert, which had

been fabricated with all the induſtry and talents of his art, flew round the houſe in all the frantic geſticulations of a maniac, howling fire and murder. His yells had all the deſired effect of conveying redoubled conſternation in the chambers of the fair ſex.

Lady Dorothy Murray, the firſt who preſented herſelf, was ſeen in her bed gown; her *téte* in the hurry was caught up with the back part, and the braid hanging over her eyes—her petticoats hurried over her with the artificial protuberance in front. It was in this attire ſhe caught hold of the affrighted Crocan, who had actually been awakened out of ſleep in all the trepidation of exceſſive fear, without having been able to collect his ſcattered ſenſes.

Being thus encloſed by her Ladyſhip, who was alſo ſcreaming for protection, and repeating, as loud as ſhe could ſhout, the word murder, the couple were ſoon ſurrounded by ſome of the ſervants.

Crocan

Crocan being thus encloſed in her Ladyſhip's grapple, and recogniſed by the ſervants, they made no heſitation to conclude, in the hurry of the confuſion, that he had availed himſelf of it to behave indecorous to her Ladyſhip. The conſequence was, the poor confectioner, to add to his extreme mortification in beholding the havock made of the vaſt exuberancy of his art, received a moſt terrible beating from them. His cries of murder being now in reality ſanctioned by the blows he received, and which had alſo driven away Lady Dorothy with a redoubled energy of ſcreaming, that part of the houſe was ſoon filled with a prodigious concourſe of people, and an imperfect rumour ſpread of the event which had juſt tranſpired. This being magnified into enormity, terror and diſmay petrified the by-ſtanders, ſeveral of whom being of the fair ſex, compoſed of chambermaids and the *bas* attendants of the family, were aſſured that they were in the moſt imminent danger of being violated, as an attempt of that nature had been made by Mr. Crocan.

At this moment Lord Belpoint and his companions coming up, reeled up to the affrighted Dianas, who redoubled their cries of murder and raviſhment with all the violence of poſſeſſed demoniacs.

Theſe kind of impure ſcreams produced an effect of the moſt deſirable nature on the beautiful brides, to the abſolute fruſtration of the drunken project. For the young ladies of the Chateau had locked themſelves ſecure in their apartments, and, in all the auſterity of immaculate virtue, they preferred the alternative of being burnt to death, to the hazard of an eſcape through ſuch dire and portentous evils.

The company who had left their apartments were aſſembled in the hall, where Lady Hales had heard of the entire deſtruction of her beautiful collation ſervice. The agitation of her mind might have been followed with the moſt alarming conſequences, had it not been for the appear-

ance

ance of Lady Dorothy Murray, who entered the hall in her whimſical attire.

Sir Simon and Philpot parading the houſe, very ſoon diſmiſſed the confuſion; the laugh was ſubſtituted, and the company returned to their apartments.

Lord Belpoint, at a late breakfaſt, openly made an apology for his juvenile prank: his egregious drunken fit was received as an apology.

Sir Simon, who was not ſorry in his heart at the misfortune which had happened to her Ladyſhip's favourite ſaloon, took ſome pains to turn the diſaſter into a moral reflection, and had actually contrived, with the aſſiſtance of Philpot, to reaſon Lady Hales into ſome compoſure; but it might be a matter of ſome diſpute, whether Mr. Crocan did not more contribute to her pacification: for by an effort of uncommon art and ingenuity he had undertaken to re-

adjuſt the decorations, and to make a ſubſtitute for thoſe that were demoliſhed.

The mind of Lady Hales thus regained a colour of chearfulneſs and the diſaſter, thanks to Lord Belpoint, only ſerved to increaſe the general good humour of the company.

THE NUPTIALS.

THE company aſſembled in the chapel —many perſons of the village admitted; among them farmer Drab and his wife— Underwood and his wife were ſeated near the altar.

Sir Simon Hales, with the greateſt privacy, and unknown to his wife, had engaged ſeveral of the moſt celebrated public ſingers to perform an anthem, compoſed on the occaſion. In the gallery on each ſide of the organ they were to be arranged in robes ſuited to the ſolemnity— accompanied with a choir of boys and girls, which had alſo been procured for the occaſion.

The band was led by one of our firſt compoſers, and which, on the appearance of the parties, was inſtantly to ſtrike up.

The

The proceſſion into the chapel from the hall was thus ordered :

Doctor Philpot in his robes ; next to him Mr. Hales and Fanny, who were ſucceeded by Samuel and Miſs Hales; Sir Simon and his lady ; Lady Dorothy and Mrs. Gordon, ſtill under the feigned title of Lady Cathneſs.

Immediately on their entry the anthem began with an awful grandeur—the parties encircled the altar, where they waited till the anthem was concluded—Fanny Underwood, in a ſimple white robe, trembled and looked pale—Mr. Hales, with a look of ineffable love, encloſing his hand in hers —Samuel and Miſs Hales much affected, and with their eyes fixed on the pavement.

THE ANTHEM.

Father of worlds, whoſe parent breath
Rais'd torpid nature from the clod
To blooming rapture—baniſh'd death;
Whom glad creation worſhips as her mighty God.

Thy wond'rous ſage incubing power,
Allated, hov'ring o'er each birth,
All nature feels—the ſhrub, the flower;
Beings of water, air, and earth.

To thee the pealing organ's notes ſhall riſe,
And the rapt mortal hymn his joyful melodies.

The religious wonder of Lady Hales and Lady Dorothy, which the anthem cauſed, was

was not to be expreſſed. The ſolemnity had the greateſt effect on their minds. When the band had finiſhed, Doctor Philpot opened the book, and prepared to read the ceremony; but Sir Simon Hales, mounting the ſtone ſteps to the altar, thus addreſſed the company:

"On the conſequent effects of theſe "nuptials I have placed all my happineſs. "Rejoicing in that tribute which ſhould "be paid to natural affection, as far as re- "gards the order of civil ſociety, I have "ſedulouſly endeavoured to encourage ra- "ther than to prevent them; knowing, "that in the union of the ſexes there can "be no laſting happineſs without an ap- "proved, a ſincere, and a mutual love. "Experience has taught me, that intereſt, "which too generally prevails in the ſa- "cred ties of marriage, moſt effectually "proves the utter bane of its comforts. "The deſpotic power of prejudice I have "therefore endeavoured to diſſipate with "all the ſtratagem and aſſiduous labour I "was maſter of. The greater part of this company

" company has been informed of my plan.
" To them I appeal for their ſanction.
" That prejudice which would ſtab the
" poignard into the breaſt of innocence
" and virtue muſt now bluſh when the
" maſk is pulled from its errors, and when
" it beholds the perfection which it had
" heretofore rejected. But the truth muſt
" now be uttered. If therefore, in the
" face of conviction, it will ſtill aſſert the
" extravagance of its tyranny, its puniſh-
" ment muſt fall with redoubled venge-
" ance on its own head. Held up to folly
" and ridicule by the wiſe and the ſober
" part of the world, it can only expect to
" receive happineſs by the baſe and ſervile
" incenſe of flattery and impertinence.

" Is not the young lady at the altar an
" honour to the hand which leads her
" there? What diſſenting voice preſent
" can aſſert her inequality? Diveſted
" of the magic of a name, the trap-
" ping of an enobled family, her vir-
" tues are co-equal with the greateſt
" hereditary influence. Is there one ſo

" loſt

" loſt to reaſon and to truth who will deny
" this aſſertion? Let the diſputant now
" come forth and alledge, that the name
" of Underwood is not of equal value to
" that of Cathneſs."

A flaſh of perception ſeemed at this inſtant to ſhoot acroſs the mind of Lady Hales—" What is this, Sir Simon?" ſhe faulteringly exclaimed.

Sir Simon. " To undeceive you,
" Madam:

" Horror and miſery would have fol-
" lowed cloſe on your prejudices. I have
" ſnatched you from error! 'Tis an ex-
" periment — that your children may be
" leſs accurſed in marriage than falls to
" the lot of thoſe whom intereſt alone have
" united.

" Behold, Madam, the two children of
" an honeſt man — the children of our
" tenant, Underwood — Will you ſuffer
" me,

" me, Madam, to preſent them to you as " ſuch ?"

The wonder-ſtriken countenances of Lady Hales and Lady Dorothy were not to be deſcribed. The lovely Frances, too greatly agitated by the ſolemnity of the ſcene, ſunk in the arms of Mr. Hales.

Samuel Underwood and Miſs Hales knelt before her Ladyſhip.

That haughty ſoul, moved by time and place, by a concurrence of well-projected, yet ſingular occurrences, would have burſt with indignation at this overture, perhaps before it had entered the h ly walls—but the miraculous agency of truth ſeemed to influence her breaſt with converſion. The conflict was ſurmounted by the ſurrounding ſcenery, and by a ſenſe of its fallacious powers. Lady Hales preſented them with her hand. Fanny reviving, flung herſelf at her feet—ſhe was raiſed to her breaſt. Sir Simon Hales, with a cordiality, perhaps for the firſt time experienced in his life, embraced

embraced his wife, in teſtimony of joy at her concurrence.

Mr. and Mrs. Underwood came from their ſeats, and were in turn preſented to her by Sir Simon.

The effect of this ſcene words would not paint. The indignant, yet ſtupified countenance of farmer Drab, diſcovered the defeat of ſavage brutality. Lady Dorothy turned away in wrath and perturbation from the altar to addreſs herſelf to the company and her Scotch *kaunections*.

But here her mortification was moſt apparent. The company had been all of them pre-informed of the plan of Sir Simon, and were the firm abettors of it; particularly the brilliant Lord Shelldrake and Lady Champignion, who openly avowed their intentions of patroniſing the much-applauded plan of the Baronet, declaring, that they ſhould take all poſſible meaſures to ſanction the entry of the young votaries of hymen into life.

Finding

Finding on all ſides that the plot had foiled her in every point of view, ſhe had only the alternative either to unite with Lady Hales in her converſion and approbation, or to appear ſingle in her way of thinking: in this inſtance ſhe would be obliged to forego the ſplendid feſtival at Boxley, and for ever take her leave of the family: therefore, with that wonderful flexibility ſo frequently obſerved in human nature, when the affairs of life are driven to an extremity, ſhe approached the altar, and deſired leave of Sir Simon to be introduced to the children of his *paur tenant*.

The expreſſion of *paur tenant* drew from the Baronet a rebuke, which, had not the mind of Lady Dorothy been leſs prepared for converſion, would have effectually repelled her Ladyſhip from all family *kaunection* whatever.

" Madam," replied Sir Simon, " po-
" verty is only applied to thoſe who are
" proud in heart and poor in charity. In
" a virtuous and induſtrious cottage there
" is

" is a far greater richneſs of ſoul than in a
" gilded manſion, where its tenants are
" ſlaves to their ſordid follies and degrad-
" ing prejudices. This match, Lady Do-
" rothy, did not originate with my *paur*
" *tenant*. His ſoul, as proud as yours,
" ſpurned at an alliance, the inequality of
" which might threaten his domeſtic hap-
" pineſs. He knew the value of a rich
" independance procured by the ſweat of
" his brow, and had ſufficient underſtand-
" ing to comprehend the real dignity
" which, as a cultivator of land, he ſuſ-
" tained in the ſtate. This match, Lady
" Dorothy, was of my own contrivance,
" and I now rejoice in the preſent oppor-
" tunity of ſmiling at the prejudices of the
" world, and the conqueſt I have obtained
" over the vanity of your own perſonal
" boaſted rank and precedency.

" Mr. Underwood, Madam, is an honeſt
" man--the nobleſt work of God—and I
" think it an honour to Mr. Hales to have
" formed an alliance, which has received

" the

" the general approbation of the firſt per-
" ſons of diſtinction in the kingdom."

LADY DOROTHY. " In troth, nephew,
" I think you are a very ſtraunge kind of
" a man—your unaccountable diſpoſition
" may, perhaps, in ſome ſhape, apologiſe
" for the ſingularity of your ſon's choice;
" and as I would na be out of faſhion, I
" ſhall, doubtleſs, give my conſent—but
" you muſt na endeavour to perſuade me
" out of my ſenſes. The naubility of
" Great Britain will na ſuffier themſelves to
" be degraded to the claſs of boors and
" ſavages. There is na always to be
" found ſuch accompliſhed cauntry laſſes
" as Fanny Underwood; and na ſuch
" well-behaved and gude comic actreſſes
" as my Laudy Cathneſs there [*curteſying
" to Mrs. Gordon.*] The naubility, I ſay,
" out of a fraulic, may for once give into
" your abſurdity; but you muſt na think,
" Sir Simon, that it will be admitted as a
" ſtanding rule."

Lady Dorothy being thus determined to
ſpeak

ſpeak her mind, ſhe dropped a curteſy to Fanny Underwood, and the ſame to Mrs. Gordon, who was now introduced to her in her real name, and as the ſiſter of Doctor Philpot.

The ceremony was now performed by the Doctor, and Fanny Underwood given away by her father, as was Miſs Hales by Sir Simon.

The *Deus miſereatur* was chanted by the choir, and the nuptials thus happily celebrated.

After the ceremony was concluded, the organ played — The company, with unfeigned marks of the fulleſt approbation, complimented Sir Simon—and the young brides and bridegrooms received the congratulations of every perſon preſent.

The entry to the grand hall was ſtrewed with flowers, where a croud of villagers were admitted to hail the appearance of Mr. and Mrs. Hales, and the young Mr. and Mrs. Underwood.

The

The company having taken refreſhments, they afterwards aſſembled on the lawn, where the lads and laſſes of the village were gathered in crouds to amuſe them with the ſports which the Baronet had proclaimed.

The May ſun gave a cheerful aſpect to the ſcene—a country dance to the tabor and pipe was a prelude to the rural diverſions.

A chaplet of flowers was preſented by a beautiful young maiden to Mrs. Hales, who, with her huſband, led down the dance, and were followed by the Underwoods—their participation ſuppreſſed the natural envy of the leſs-favoured maidens, and endeared the names of the beautiful daughter of Underwood to her old acquaintance.

When the ſports were concluded, an ox roaſted whole was extended on a large table under a temporary pavilion in the lawn. The flowing cup of ale, the cheerful countenances of the ruſtics, conſpired

to adorn the ſcene in all the exuberance of terreſtrial happineſs.

When the company were regaled with this rural plan of the Baronet's hoſpitality, they were uſhered into the magnificent ſaloon, which ſeemed by the repairs it had undergone to have received but little injury from the diſaſter of the drunken project. A ſplendid dinner was now diſplayed on the table, and a general hilarity on the countenance of every perſon. Lady Hales at the top of the table, Sir Simon at the bottom, with Doctor Philpot, the maſter of the ceremonies, on his right hand. In the center, on one ſide, Mr. and Mrs. Hales; on her left hand, Mrs. Underwood, her mother. On the oppoſite ſide, Samuel Underwood and his lady; and to the right of the former, his father.

Lady Dorothy had taken her place next to Mrs. Gordon, and with whom, on the recollection of an earlier period of life, ſhe had been acquainted; which circumſtance did not a little ſerve to reconcile her Lady-

ſhip to the unforeſeen *kaunection* which had taken place.

The eaſe and grace with which Mrs. Hales and her brother conducted themſelves under their preſent and natural appearance, confirmed the company in the general ſenſe of the appropriated alliance; and every public teſtimony of approbation was beſtowed on them.

Lady Hales finding the order of her ſaloon reſtored to her full ſatisfaction, on which ſhe had fixed a great portion of her happineſs on the celebration of the nuptials, reſumed much of her good humour; and when ſhe beheld the introduction of the deſert in all the elegance which her fancy had ſuggeſted, her ruling paſſion ſeemed, by its full gratification, to have diſſipated her family prejudice. The company flattered the magnificency of her taſte, and ſhe ſeemed to be perfectly reconciled to the matrimonial election of her ſon and daughter.

In

In the courſe of the dinner the Baronet had ſent up a glaſs of Champaign to Underwood, which being ſoon after repeated by Philpot, his natural powers of a good underſtanding unfolded themſelves, and the company beheld a character of true worth and native dignity.

At night there was a ball in the ſaloon. Lord Shelldrake danced a minuet with Mrs. Hales, and Lord Belpoint the ſame with Mrs. Underwood. Country dances enſued.

The curtain now dropped—The drama was concluded.

But, oh, the reward of native love!—Mr. Hales might exclaim with the poet,

———*Bene mutuis*
Fidum pectus amoribus.

4 DE 58

FINIS.

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